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# the HOPE OF GLORY

by  
Dale Moody

*To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory (Colossians 1:27).*

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*To*  
**MILDRED**

## Preface

THE CONTEMPLATION of things eternal leaves creatures of time trembling before the deep mystery that is our destiny and our home. Beyond personal repentance and the confession of sins such contemplation is one of the best exercises in spiritual humility I know, and it develops the attitude that all good theology is doxology.

More than once this "glory book" has almost gone the way of other efforts, but it has finally been finished before the realm which is its theme has been reached. Some difficult and dark questions need more light than we have, but we have let our light shine as far as it would go. We have tried to keep within the realm of revelation, but there is so much there that is still mystery: "For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face" (I Cor. 13:12).

Two problems have pressed hard at every step. The one has to do with language. In a class with alert students one is able to weave back and forth, at times using "the language of Canaan," at other times using the "existential" tongue. Most of the volume is in "the language of Canaan," but we hope a few suggestions will point to a philosophical translation if this is desired.

The second problem is literary. A deep love for the original languages of Holy Scripture has not been hidden, but all Hebrew and Greek words are in English characters. The problem of literary forms, illuminated by recent studies in form history (*Formgeschichte*), has made it necessary to quote in full many passages. Space has not permitted a full discussion, but I have tried to honor my "guides" with appropriate documentation. If at any place proper credit has not been given, I beg forgiveness.

The Revised Standard Version, unless otherwise indicated, has been used as the basis for Scripture quotations, even when I have made my own translations. Some abbreviations have been used:

ASV — American Standard Version.

C.R. — *Corpus Reformatorum.*

NEB — New English Bible

KJV — King James Version

RSV — Revised Standard Version.

TWNT — *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, herausgegeben von Gerhard Kittel und Gerhard Friedrich (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1933-). Bände I-VI.

W.A. — Weimarer Ausgabe *Luthers Werke*, ed. J. C. F. Knaake and others (Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1883-).

I.B. — *The Interpreter's Bible*, ed. George Arthur Buttrick (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1955). Volumes 1-12.

Mrs. Glenn (Martha) Hinson has been both patient and efficient in transforming a chaotic manuscript into a typed copy. Dr. Hinson has been kind enough to read the whole manuscript and to prepare the index. Dr. Leo T. Crismon, Librarian at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, has never failed to help as requested, including the toilsome checking of my references. Harold Smith and James Bruton, my dependable assistants, have toiled in checking references and making corrections. To these faithful friends I express my deep appreciation, but they are not responsible for my conclusions and errors.

Two families have given me courage to go on in times of discouragement. Mr. and Mrs. J. Newton Rayzor of Houston, Texas, added to their personal friendship a generous grant that made a year of special study on another subject possible, but I have used two months of this time to complete the present manuscript. My wife and four children, Sue, Linda, Marcia, and John, have been most patient with an absent-minded and impatient professor walking around with "one foot in heaven."

The book is dedicated to my wife, a source of quiet strength and unselfish devotion.

—DALE MOODY

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## *Chapter One*

### Hope in History

HOPE HOVERS about the very heart of the Christian faith. Loss of hope is loss of heart, and faith is unable to live without a heart, shut off as it is from the breath of a blessed hope. Despair and cynicism creep into the dark void, and honest men may fight manfully on against monstrous evil, but it does not dispel the darkness. One of the recent literary figures of France, speaking at the Dominican Monastery of Latour-Maubourg in 1948, honestly confessed: "I share with you the same revulsion from evil. But I do not share your hope, and I continue to struggle against this universe in which children suffer and die."<sup>1</sup> Such disarming honesty demands respect, and Christian faith is unrealistic to turn a deaf ear to this cry of despair.

This exegetical and systematic study constantly turns a sympathetic and appreciative ear to this cry of modern man out of a meaningless void. Only a calloused Christianity, nestled in a false security of members and money, can be indifferent to "this sort of thing." The day will come without long delay when whole church bodies, bound by tradition and indifferent to truth, will be awakened from dogmatic slumber by the thunder of theological revolution. Men in the clutches of despair demand a faith that will not fail at the crucial hour. As one Christian theologian, speaking out of the existential situation, has said: "Faith without hope is not faith."<sup>2</sup> Hope is to despair what faith is to doubt and love is to hate. Be-

1 Albert Camus, *Resistance, Rebellion, and Death*, tr. Justin O'Brien (New York: Knopf, 1961), p. 71.

2 Heinrich Ott, *Eschatologie* (Zollikon: Evangelischer Verlag, 1958), p. 13. A word study has been made by Rudolf Bultmann and Karl Rengstorf, *Hope*, tr. Dorothea M. Barton (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1963).

tween them we are forced to choose. In the profoundest way possible "faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1). It affirms a meaningful future for man, history, and the whole creation.

*Biblical Basis.* The Scriptures look not only for the last things (*ta eschata*) but to the living reality of the last one (*ho eschatos*) who anticipates the secrets of the future and establishes the events of the past. This is first of all expressed in terms of the sovereignty of God, the Lord of history and the King and Redeemer of Israel, who declares (Isa. 44:6f.):

I am the first, and I am the last;  
besides me there is no god.  
Who is like me? Let him proclaim it,  
let him declare and set it forth before me.  
Who has announced from of old the things to come?  
Let him tell us what is yet to be.

The sole deity, who creates, judges, and redeems, has an eschatological relation to all events in history and to all the experiences of men. All things are last things on the boundary between God and man, at the limits of man's life and in the light of God's purpose. Though He is a God who hides Himself (Isa. 45:15), He is never absent from the affairs of men. Meeting Him makes all things last things.

God's sovereignty also established the past, so that the Redeemer and the Creator of man are one. The first things rest on the first one as the last things rest on the last one. Isaiah 48:12f. has it:

I am he, I am the first, and I am the last.  
My hand laid the foundation of the earth,  
and my right hand spread out the heavens;  
when I call to them, they stand forth together.

The present relation to God on whom man's entire hope is based becomes the point of departure for understanding the Whence and Whither of life.

The "last things" (*ta eschata*) have to do with the end of life. The term is not found in the New Testament, but the apocryphal writing of Ecclesiasticus has the statement: "In all you do, remember the end (*ta eschata*) of your life, and then you will never sin" (7:36). The New Testament does speak of "the last state" (Matt. 12:45), "the last times" (I Pet. 1:20), and "the last day" (John 6:39).

The Lordship of Christ is the supreme revelation of this eschatological relation to God. Christ is the last man (*ho eschatos*, I Cor. 15:45). The risen Lord, walking in the midst of His churches, before whom we know ourselves as those who are destined to die, identifies Himself with the words: "I am the first and the last, and the living one; I died, and behold I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades" (Rev. 1:17f.). The words He speaks are "the words of the first and the last, who died and came to life" (2:8). He is the one, hidden now but manifest at His coming, before whom all are to be repaid for deeds done, and who vindicates Himself as "the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end" (22:13).

All theology and Christology are ultimately eschatology. It is only when man is preoccupied with penultimate concerns that last things appear as an appendix left over from the major concerns of the present life. The hidden future inheres in the present relation to God as He has made His person and purpose known in Christ. It is the confidence that "he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6) that focuses all things on the end. The present encounter with the living Christ makes known the mystery: "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27). Eschatological expectation is guided by the hope that "when Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory" (Col. 3:4).

*Greek Types.* The primitive church, persecuted by political power and compassed about by pagan culture, plunged into the world to light a candle of hope against the darkness. Early Christian formulations of the faith may at times sound strange to the ear out of tune with their circumstances, but more patient listening leaves one pining for the robust faith and radiant hope of those heroes.

Around the year 150 the literal eschatology of Justin Martyr looked for Jerusalem to be rebuilt, and the literal reign of Christ to endure for a thousand years. He no doubt looked for Isaiah 65:17-25, along with Revelation 20:1-5, to be fulfilled down to the last detail, although he recognized "that many who belong to the pure and pious faith, and are true Christians, think otherwise" (*Dialogue with Trypho*, 80).

The chiliasm of Irenaeus, less literal but linked through

Polycarp to the Apostle John, has more than once been rescued from irrelevance and today enjoys great influence on penetrating and critical theologians.<sup>3</sup> His wrestle with creation, incarnation, and the resurrection before the threat of second-century Gnosticism constitutes the core of one of the theological classics of the twentieth century.<sup>4</sup> The broad sympathies of the following pages with this type of theology should not be interpreted as a sign of insecure traditionalism. It is rather the result of concern for an eschatology that takes seriously the historical dimension.

The universalism of Origen, filled with a speculative daring that would freeze the fundamentalist mind, is not without value as an exploration into the realms of the possible. One of the most lucid and learned Roman Catholic scholars of the present has found it necessary to rescue this ancient genius from distortion and set him within a sympathetic frame.<sup>5</sup> Although the conclusions of this study turn more toward Irenaeus than toward Origen, it is hoped that the critical reader will realize that there has been an attempt to hear Origen out to the end. Little is learned by a quick conclusion.

*Latin Trends.* The amillennialism of Augustine, like the universalism of Origen, is at times dominated more by the mind of Plato than by biblical theology, but his great influence down to the present demands prolonged consideration. Almost the whole of the amillennial system, so ardently defended by many contemporary conservatives, may be found in Augustine's most brilliant writing.<sup>6</sup>

Augustine's doctrine of a spiritual millennium, identified with a thousand years of church history, was destined to set in motion a quake of chiliastic rumblings, spiritual and apocalyptic, that would exercise a great influence on the course of human history. In the twelfth century, with the thousand years over and the crusades in commotion against the Saracens, Antichrist became identified with Islam, and the hope of a new age of

<sup>3</sup> Gustaf Wingren, *Man and the Incarnation*, tr. Ross MacKenzie (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1959), pp. 181-192.

<sup>4</sup> Anders Nygren, *Agape and Eros*, tr. Philip S. Watson (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1953), pp. 393-412.

<sup>5</sup> Jean Danielou, *Origen*, tr. Walter Mitchell (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1955), pp. 276-289. Clement of Alexandria before and Gregory of Nyssa after Origen taught universalism.

<sup>6</sup> *The City of God*, Books XX-XXII.

the Spirit flourished under the prophetic leadership of Joachim of Flora (c. 1145-1202).<sup>7</sup> His *Commentary on the Apocalypse* (I.5) taught that there are three ages: that of the Father (the Law), that of the Son (the Gospel) and that of the Holy Spirit which was about to dawn. On the basis of 1,260 days in Revelation 11:3 and 12:6, counting each day a year, the beginning of the new age was expected in A.D. 1260. Church historians, with the rare exception of the great Neander, do not generally give adequate recognition to the reforming zeal stimulated, especially among Franciscans, by this "spiritual" eschatology. Dante's *Divine Comedy* looks upon him as a prophetic spirit and places him in Paradise (XII. 140f.).

The personal eschatology of Thomas Aquinas, incorporating the developed purgatorial suggestions of Augustine, pursues in great detail the problems related to death, life after death, and the resurrection of the body.<sup>8</sup> With great precision he argues that sensitive powers remain in the soul after separation from the body, that the acts of the sensitive powers remain in the separated soul, and that the separated soul can suffer punishment inflicted by a material fire. His view of the soul is shaped by the study of Aristotle, and is alien to the Scriptures, but on this basis he erected his system of suffrages for the dead, prayers to the saints in heaven, and the process of a purgatorial refinement by fire. In cosmic eschatology he was unable to follow Aristotle's theory of an eternal circular movement of the world with no beginning and no end, turning more to the Stoic idea of a universal conflagration, as in II Peter 3:10-12, which would renovate the world.

*Protestant Reserve.* Martin Luther's revolt was with such vigor against the Roman system that it left an indelible mark on both his personal and historical eschatology. His theory of soul sleeping between death and resurrection anticipated an immediate passage of each person from death to the final judgment, not a process of purification in a papal purgatory. Death for him was a moment of utmost eschatological concentration in which the passage to heaven was all in one leap (*alles auf einmal*).<sup>9</sup>

7 Henry Bett, *Joachim of Flora* (London: Methuen, 1931).

8 *Summa Theologica*, I.II.Q. 69-99. A medieval poem that expresses similar beliefs is *Pearl*, edited by E. V. Gordon (Oxford: Clarendon, 1953).

9 *Luthers Werke* (Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1883-). Hereafter W. A.), 12, p. 596. Cf. 7, pp. 149-453; 10/3, pp. 191ff.; 13, p. 192; 14, pp. 40f.; 30/2, pp. 367ff.; 34/1, pp. 536f.; 34/2, pp. 108ff.; 36, p. 349.

His historical eschatology was conditioned by the concept of the two kingdoms, the spiritual and the worldly. This distinction, however, was more dialectical than historical, more in terms of two realms than of the two ages of the New Testament.<sup>10</sup> The spiritual kingdom exists wherever the word of God is heard, a *Regnum fidei* that is invisible to unbelief. Yet Luther looked for a final consummation of history in which Antichrist would be destroyed by Christ. At that time the *Regnum fidei* will come to an end, because it will no longer be invisible.

Calvinism did little more than purge eschatology of Purgatory, leaving Dante's Inferno and the Paradise, into which souls entered at once after death. Calvin himself was definitely shy of the book of Revelation, as one can see by his meagre use of this writing and by the fact that he wrote no commentary on this last book of the New Testament. His historical eschatology was even weaker than his personal eschatology, and a thorough study of his system hardly gets beyond the first part of this study. One may fully agree with the conclusion of Heinrich Quistorp when this sympathetic and kindly critic says:

Eschatology in general became a foster child of Protestantism (Nietzsche). But the reformers themselves are not so much responsible for this as the growing influence of mysticism and the modernism which succeeded it. As far as the reformers are concerned they brought eschatology into its own (and this applies particularly to Calvin) in connection with their general evangelical message. Yet the very example of Calvin has shown us also that the reformed doctrine of the last things (that of Calvin more than that of Luther) did not do full justice to essential biblical concerns.<sup>11</sup>

In the theology of Martin Butzer the kingdom of Christ, *Regnum Christi*, is related to the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven. His book *De Regno Christi* (1557) views the kingdom of Christ as a revelation of the eternal kingdom

10 W. A., 40/1, p. 46. Cf. 6, p. 293f.; 7, pp. 683f.; 51, p. 11. For the references to Luther, as well as for Butzer, T. F. Torrance, *Kingdom and Church* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1956), has been very helpful.

11 Heinrich Quistorp, *Calvin's Doctrine of Last Things*, tr. Harold Knight (London: Lutterworth, 1955), p. 194.

of God, but the full realization will be the kingdom of heaven. T. F. Torrance has suggested that Butzer's kingdom of Christ as the present communion of love may be joined to Luther's eschatology of faith and Calvin's eschatology of hope and viewed as an eschatology of love, but Quistorp is not unfair in his criticism of Protestant eschatology.

*Sectarian Resurgence.* Protestant sectarianism, compensating for orthodox neglect, has often elevated eschatology from foster child to queen of theology. Anabaptists, the left wing of the Reformation, often made the Apocalypse of John the happy hunting ground for eschatological speculations. Revolutionary millennial sectarianism erupted as an unusual social force in the sixteenth century. Thomas Münzer, a learned mystic and fanatic, at first followed Luther but found the German reformer lacking in chiliastic fervor. In the spirit of Elijah in the slaughter of the priests of Baal, he sought to prepare for the millennium by leading the righteous in the extermination of the unrighteous. In 1534 the Anabaptists made a disastrous attempt to establish the city of Münster as the New Jerusalem, but social unrest continued to spread under the impact of millennial movements.<sup>12</sup>

At times mystical millennialism mitigated the military elements in the movements. In 1757 Emanuel Swedenborg, a Swedish scientist, claimed that he saw the last judgment take place in the spiritual world while he was broad awake and that the Lord sent forth His angels to gather the elect on June 19, 1770. His voluminous writings are too involved to make a mass appeal, but he has had considerable influence among mystical intellectuals in America.<sup>13</sup> His Church of the New Jerusalem is far removed from the New Jerusalem of the Anabaptists established by military might.

Adventism found fertile soil in the free church tradition of America, and one of the most ardent forms had as its prophet William Miller (1782-1849) of Massachusetts. Fantastic legends, many of which are without foundation, grew as religious excitement recalled the great day of October 22, 1844, when

12 The story is told in detail by Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium* (Fairlawn, N.J.: Essential Books, 1957), pp. 209-306. See also George Williams, *The Radical Reformation* (London: Wiedenfeld and Nicolson, 1963), pp. 44-57.

13 Marguerite Beck Black, *The New Church in the New World* (New York: Holt, 1932).

tens of thousands of Miller's disciples waited for heaven to open and the Lord to descend in a cloud of glory.<sup>14</sup> Today his followers, the Seventh-day Adventists, are a kindly people who recognize the mistake of setting dates and are known for their devout lives and exemplary stewardship. One of the most encyclopedic collections of eschatological ideas in print is by one of their learned leaders.<sup>15</sup>

Great popular appeal has been made to the underprivileged masses by Russellism, now known as Jehovah's Witnesses, and the religious leader unaware of their zeal has much to learn about the phenomena of religion, especially in America. C. T. Russell first maintained that the second coming of Christ took place in 1874, but this was later revised to the close of 1914. The Platonic Christian, unaware of the biblical teaching on the soul and immortality, finds it frustrating to refute their string of Scriptures against natural immortality and the state of the dead between death and the resurrection. For them the millennium will be the final test for all men of all times raised from the dead, and after that the unrepentant wicked will be annihilated that the saints may reign unmolested.<sup>16</sup>

Even greater appeal is made by the neat system of dispensationalism, which avoids date setting and supplies all the answers in seven compartments. This movement reaches people in all classes of culture and in all Protestant denominations. J. A. Bengel, influential New Testament scholar and source of the *Heilsgeschichte* (salvation history) school of eschatology, has been claimed by dispensationalism, but the real genius of the movement was J. N. Darby (1800-1882), the founder of the Plymouth Brethren.<sup>17</sup> Turning away from the biblical

14 An authentic history that corrects many misconceptions of the movement is by Francis D. Nichol, *The Midnight Cry* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1944).

15 LeRoy Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1946, -48, -50, -54), 4 vols.

16 Herbert Hewitt Stroup, *The Jehovah's Witnesses* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1945).

17 Clarence B. Bass, *Backgrounds of Dispensationalism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1960). Dispensationalism dates from the time of "Barnabas" (15:4) in the second century. At first it was adopted by Augustine (*De cat. rud.*, 22-25), but he later abandoned it to lay the foundations for amillennialism (*Civ. Dei*, xx-xxii). See the collection of references by Joseph C. Christopher in *Ancient Christian Writings* (Westminster, Md.: Newman, 1946), II, 123, 136.

teaching of two covenants and two ages, Darby forced the Scriptures into a scheme of seven dispensations.

After C. I. Scofield took Darby's teachings as the basis of his annotated Bible and got it published by Oxford University Press (1909, 1917) the movement spread like a forest fire so that now no evangelical group in America has escaped these eschatological claims. Some of the more zealous disciples blew a brief note on Revelation 4:1, pertaining to a pretribulation rapture, into a big balloon, which is presently being punctured by some careful students of the Scriptures.<sup>18</sup>

It is not difficult to see why there was an eschatological revolt against the optimistic rationalism in much modern thought. Alexander Pope, in the first of his "moral epistles," could write (*Essay on Man*):

Hope humbly then; with trembling pinions soar;  
Wait the great teacher Death, and God adore.  
What future bliss He gives not thee to know,  
But gives that hope to be the blessing now.  
Hope springs eternal in the human breast:  
Man never is, but always to be blest.  
Thy soul, uneasy and confined from home,  
Rests and expatiates in a life to come.

This could be said to men who doted on Greek dualism and looked on death as a "great teacher," much as Socrates welcomed the poison hemlock, believing that only the body dies, that the soul is by nature immortal.<sup>19</sup>

The concept of immortality of the soul seems thin in the face of biblical realism which speaks of death as "the last enemy" (I Cor. 15:26), but it is the faded faith by which many Christians, Catholic and Protestant, still live. Their texts are taken from Paul, but their thoughts are from Plato — a mediocre mixture of faith and reason! This mistaken view of the Christian hope is greatly shocked and badly shaken, not

18 George E. Ladd, *Crucial Questions about the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952), *The Blessed Hope* (Eerdmans, 1956), *The Gospel of the Kingdom* (Eerdmans, 1959). Encyclopedic efforts have been made to answer Ladd by Gerald B. Stanton, *Kept from the Hour* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1956) and J. Dwight Pentecost, *Things to Come* (Findlay, Ohio: Dunham, 1958).

19 Oscar Cullmann, *Immortality of the Soul or Resurrection of the Dead* (New York: Macmillan, 1958), pp. 19-27.

only by the events of our time, but also by sound exegesis of Holy Scripture.<sup>20</sup>

*Recent Reconstruction.* The new Protestantism ushered in by Friedrich Schleiermacher's theology of religious experience could never be charged with eschatological excess.<sup>21</sup> His theological method, requiring that all doctrines be derived immediately from the religious consciousness or at least be implications from such experience, results in an experiential eschatology that is almost agnostic. He is frank to confess that he is unable to ascribe the same value to last things as to other doctrines. Eschatology is here indeed a "foster child."

His personal eschatology, proceeding on the false presupposition that the soul is by nature immortal, amounts to little more than a belief in the persistence of personality after death. The difficulties involved in conceiving of a continuity of consciousness after the death of the body inclined him to believe that the spiritual body is given at death, but this he found to be in conflict with his historical eschatology formulated as the consummation of the Church.

This historical eschatology thinks of the consummation of the Church as the conversion of the world to Christianity, the return of Christ as a "sudden leap to perfection," and the last judgment as the exclusion of all evil influences from the life of the Church. His evolutionary approach to history, combined with the Platonic idea of natural immortality, leads logically, as Schleiermacher is consistent to see, to the universalist conclusion of a final restoration of all souls.

The ethical eschatology of Albrecht Ritschl, if indeed it can be called eschatology, was both personal and social. "The Kingdom of God is the *summum bonum* which God realizes in men; and at the same time it is their common task, for it is only through the rendering of obedience on man's part that God's sovereignty possesses continuous existence."<sup>22</sup> The religious emphasis of this conception has promoted a type of pietistic moralism unable to get much beyond the belief that "the kingdom of God is in your heart," an idea supported in con-

20 *Ibid.*, pp. 5-12.

21 *The Christian Faith*, tr. H. R. Mackintosh, J. S. Stewart (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1928), pp. 696-722.

22 *Justification and Reconciliation*, tr. H. R. Mackintosh, A. B. Macaulay (New York: Scribner, 1900), p. 30.

servative groups by appeal to an incorrect translation of Luke 17:21 in the King James Version (cf. RSV).

The social application to the "common task" has thought of men as "labourers together with God" (I Cor. 3:9), another inaccurate translation of a familiar passage (KJV; cf. RSV). Kitschl himself laid the foundation for this type of thinking with his theory of a kingdom of righteousness opposed to a kingdom of sin.<sup>23</sup> This kingdom of moral values in its social proclamation found expression in much of what has been called the "social gospel," but conservative advocates of the so-called "simple gospel" are ever at the task to "expand," "establish," and "extend" the kingdom in "kingdom work" and with "kingdom enterprises."

The terrors of the twentieth century have made idealism tasteless and without nurture. The figure of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane, where He "began to be greatly distressed and troubled" (Mark 14:33), speaks directly to the real human situation and to the threat of death: "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death" (14:34). Those who look with Him into the dreadful depths may possibly grasp the meaning of His cry: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (15:34). Today is more the age of revolution than the age of reason, and faith that has no better hope than to trust in man is dead. Faith that means more than assent to ideas springing out of human speculation is not only a deeper faith but also a different faith. It is faith in God as He has made Himself known in Christ, faith in God who teaches us that death can only be destroyed by death. God's relation to the man in Christ makes faith personal, existential, far more than acceptance of some uncertain propositions about future possibilities.

It is no wonder that the "consistent eschatology" of Albert Schweitzer, building on the eschatology suggested by Johannes Weiss in *Jesus' Preaching of the Kingdom of God* (1892), broke like a blinding flash into the almost total eclipse of eschatology that had darkened Protestantism at the beginning of the twentieth century. His primary concern is time in relation to the imminence of the kingdom of God. The most famous passage in his teaching is the theory stated in *Von Reimarus zu Wrede* (1906), of the two pushes on the wheel of the world.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 330.

There is silence all around. The Baptist appears, and cries: "Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Soon after that comes Jesus, and in the knowledge that He is the coming Son of Man lays hold of the wheel of the world to set it moving on that last revolution which is to bring all ordinary history to a close. It refuses to turn, and He throws Himself upon it. Then it does turn; and it crushes Him. Instead of bringing in the eschatological conditions, He has destroyed them. The wheel rolls onward, and the mangled body of the one immeasurably great man, who was strong enough to think of Himself as the spiritual ruler of mankind and to bend history to His purpose, is hanging upon it still. That is His victory and His reign.<sup>24</sup>

The first great push was the Galilean preaching mission, and the second was His passion in Jerusalem.

Belief in the imminence of the kingdom of God makes the ethical teachings of Jesus an *Interimsethik*, a guide to life between the present age and the coming age of glory. This view has at times been severely criticized, but all Christian ethics are interim ethics if indeed we are now living between the ages. A pilgrim ethic is an interim ethic, even though the interim be much longer than first anticipated.

Paul too, according to Schweitzer, believed in the imminence of the kingdom of God and in the immediate return of Jesus in judgment and messianic glory. For Paul it "is not a question of a purely spiritual redemption, but that the whole physical and hyperphysical being of the man is thereby translated into a new condition. Body and soul are redeemed together; and in such a way that not only the elect portion of mankind, but the whole world is completely transformed in a great catastrophic event."<sup>25</sup> Even Paul's mysticism is eschatological. "The fact that it appears in connection with the expectation of the end of the world, and is founded upon cosmic events, gives a distinctive character to the Pauline mysticism."<sup>26</sup> Schweitzer made interpretations that are now recognized as no longer tenable, but eschatological thinking of the present owes him a debt for recovering the eschatological perspective of the gospel.

24 *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, tr. W. Montgomery (New York: Macmillan, 1948), pp. 368f.

25 *Paul and His Interpreters*, tr. W. Montgomery (London: A. & C. Black, 1912), p. 162, n. 3.

26 *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle*, tr. W. Montgomery (New York: Holt, 1931), p. 23.

Rudolf Otto's "anticipated eschatology" is strong at the very point where Schweitzer's "consistent eschatology" is weak. He agrees with Schweitzer that the coming of the kingdom of God is a future event, but the powers of this coming kingdom were made manifest in the person and work of the charismatic Christ.<sup>27</sup> Then the power of the transcendent kingdom broke into the world sphere in the person of Christ so that the kingdom was already "in the midst" of the Pharisees (Luke 17:20f.).<sup>28</sup> In the exorcisms of Jesus the kingdom of God expelled the demonic kingdom and power of Satan, and this meant the presence of the transcendent and future kingdom of God (Matt. 12:28; Luke 17:20f.).<sup>29</sup> The kingdom of God is interpreted as primarily in the future but, in a dynamic way, partly in the present.

C. H. Dodd's "realized eschatology" shifts the coming of the kingdom of God almost completely to the present. Although he pays tribute to Otto's insights, he pushes the emphasis on the present far beyond Otto's intention. "This declaration that the Kingdom of God has already come, necessarily dislocates the whole eschatological scheme in which its expected coming closes the long vista of the future. The *eschaton* has moved from the future to the present, from the sphere of expectation into that of realized experience."<sup>30</sup>

At appropriate places in succeeding chapters many of the interpretations of Dodd will be evaluated, but two preliminary impressions may be mentioned here. First of all, his Platonic idealism leads him to relate the kingdom of God to time in such a way that he argues far beyond the exegetical evidence for passages that proclaim the kingdom of God as present. He also finds he is unable to appropriate the apocalyptic passages, though they are far more prominent in the New Testament than those which speak of a dynamic present.

His major contribution is found in the focus of attention on what God has already begun to do in Jesus Christ. He says:

Here then is the fixed point from which our interpretation of the teaching regarding the Kingdom of God must start. It represents

27 *The Kingdom of God and the Son of Man*, tr. Floyd V. Filson, Bertram-Lee-Woolf (London: Lutterworth, 1943), pp. 344f.

28 *Ibid.*, pp. 131-137.

29 *Ibid.*, pp. 97-107.

30 *The Parables of the Kingdom* (London: Nisbet, 1935), p. 50.

the ministry of Jesus as "realized eschatology," that is to say, as the impact upon the world of the "powers of the world to come" in a series of events, unprecedented and unrepeatable, now in actual process.<sup>31</sup>

With this perspective the first stage in the recovery of eschatology in our century was reached, but the problem of eternity in relation to time is still to be probed.

Christian hope is the spiritual perspective which seeks to understand the future in relation to the saving act of God in Christ. Past heritage and the present situation have a meaning which is disclosed fully only at the consummation of the historical process. "For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience" (Rom. 8:24f.).

It is the distinction between the hidden and the revealed, the veiled and the unveiled, that furnishes adequate lighting for any valid view of the future, and defines the relation between faith and hope. "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1).

Resurrection with Christ is a rebirth of life that reaches to the boundary between time and eternity, to the point where the ambiguities of the historical process are clarified in the consummation of glory. "By his great mercy we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and to an inheritance which is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (I Pet. 1:3-5).

There are several types of eschatology, in a second stage of study, concerned with a variety of relations. Personal eschatology is related to personal consciousness, and this has flowered forth in modern existential thought, which employs the idea of primal history. Primal history flies above the clouds of historical process on a sort of timeless historical plane and thus attempts to avoid the problems of linear history. One of the strongest advocates of this view is Rudolf Bultmann, who finds "the core of history" in man, and around this core of human personality the open future is explored. By the personal de-

31 *Ibid.*, p. 51.

cision of the present "the yield of the past is gathered in and the meaning of the future is chosen."<sup>32</sup>

Religious experience becomes the end of history. "This is the character of every historical situation; in it the problem and the meaning of the past and future are enclosed and are waiting, as it were, to be unveiled by human decisions."<sup>33</sup> Self-understanding is the understanding of history. Autobiography is historiography. In a timeless triumph Bultmann gives the admonition: "Do not look around yourself into universal history, you must look into your own personal history."<sup>34</sup> Human personality is the dimension in which human history is to be understood. "In every moment slumbers the possibility of being the eschatological moment."<sup>35</sup> There is much to be learned about human destiny from human consciousness; but the question may be raised whether eschatological hope can be confined to existential insight.

The linear history that Bultmann attempts to avoid has been vigorously defended by Oscar Cullmann in various writings, especially in his book *Christ and Time*. In contrast to Bultmann's personal eschatology the views of Cullmann may be described as historical eschatology. In the place of religious experience he puts the event of revelation, and he substitutes for "the core of history" in man "the center of history" in Christ. The whole of history is viewed from this central point, so that creation as the beginning and the consummation as the end are the corollaries that define the limits of the historical process.

Time has a real *archē* (beginning) and a real *telos* (end), and promise is fulfilled in a sequence of meaningful events that reach both backward and forward from the Christ-event. In his distinction between primal and eschatological history Cullmann warns against a timeless view that breaks the bond between the central event and the continuous line.<sup>36</sup> This teleological view of history is a revival of the idea of *Heilsgeschichte* (history of salvation), a term coined by J. A. Bengel (1687-1752) and used with great fruitfulness in the study of escha-

32 *The Presence of Eternity* (New York: Harper, 1957), p. 141.

33 *Ibid.*, pp. 141f.

34 *Ibid.*, p. 155. Cf. R. Bultmann, *New Testament Studies*, I (1954), p. 13.

35 *Ibid.*, *ad loc.*

36 *Christ and Time*, tr. Floyd V. Filson (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1950), p. 106.

tology. It may be defined as "the power by which purely human history is transformed into the history of God."<sup>37</sup>

A third relation in eschatological thinking is represented by the cosmic eschatology of Karl Heim. This stands in vivid contrast to all types of eschatology which avoid the question of cosmic catastrophe, although the difference is mostly one of emphasis and focus. Cosmic eschatology becomes involved in natural science as historical eschatology becomes involved in historical science, but Heim has not shirked these questions. His life work finds fullest expression in his six volumes on *Protestant Faith and Modern Thought*. The last volume, on the creation and end of the world, gathers an impressive system around the center of eschatology.

His apologetic method draws a distinction between the condition of polarity in which all things are in bondage to sin, death, and Satan and the condition of the supra-polar in which the whole cosmic order is taken up into the freedom of redemption. His apocalyptic message adopts scientific truth as a weapon against false beliefs, and uses scientific thought to support Christian hope. This is clearly illustrated in his use of the "eschatology of natural science" to point toward the possibility of the world's total destruction. The positive hope of the Christian faith moves from the idea of the fallen creation in polarity to a cosmic redemption involving "the whole basic form of this world."<sup>38</sup> This transformation began with the resurrection of Christ and is completed with the restoration of all to God who will be "all in all" (I Cor. 15:28).

In the light of the present situation the Christian hope becomes concerned with the problems represented by these last three types of eschatological discussion. The hope of man speaks to the questions raised by the mood of existential nihilism. The rosy idealism of the past has vanished in the autumn of human decadence and despair. The hope of history grapples with the perplexing problems that threaten the very meaning of human history, and attempts to chink the cracks of history with acts of God.<sup>39</sup> The hope of creation looks into the great

<sup>37</sup> Otto A. Piper, "Heilsgeschichte" in *A Handbook of Christian Theology*, ed. Marvin Halverson, Arthur A. Cohen (New York: Meridian, 1958), p. 159.

<sup>38</sup> Karl Heim, *The World: Its Creation and Consummation*, tr. Robert Smith (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1962), p. 110. Cf. I Cor. 7:31.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Carl Michalson, *The Hinge of History* (New York: Scribner, 1959). God is more the Person in the process than the God of the gaps.

abyss of nothingness and finds hope in the newness of God. Therefore, the three divisions follow: the hope of man, the hope of history, the hope of creation.<sup>40</sup>

40 Cf. Paul Althaus, "Eschatology," in *A Handbook of Christian Theology*, pp. 101-106.

Part I

**The Hope of Man**

## *Chapter Two*

### Life

A FAMOUS COMMUNIST philosopher stood before a group of eager students at Warsaw University in Poland. One of the students who had been taught that there is no God and that religion is "the opiate of the people" dropped an intellectual bombshell as he timidly put the question: "Please don't be angry, but could you explain the meaning of life, sir?" Hundreds of eyes turned on Professor Adam Schaff to hear his answer to this disturbing question: "What is the meaning of life?"

This question, which — too long overlooking personal concern — Communist thinking has started to answer, was asked and answered long ago by Christian wisdom: "What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes" (Jas. 4:14). This, however, is the meaning only of this transient temporal life, not the hope of life that is found in fellowship with God. It may be that the common ground where a dialogue between the Christian and the Communist can make progress is this quest for the meaning of life. For the Christian who believes in God, it raises the hope of eternal life. Professor Schaff was right when he recognized that "as long as people die, suffer, lose their loved ones, just so long will questions about the meaning of life have full rights."<sup>1</sup>

Living things want to live, and man as the crown of all living creatures longs for life that leaps the limits of the temporal and the transient. Those who would strip down life to naked rationalism overlook the mysterious and find them-

<sup>1</sup> The account and quotations are found in *Time*, LXXVII (June 2, 1961), 58. Cf. Harrison E. Salisbury, "Spiritual Key Is Hunted by Some in Soviet Science," *New York Times*, CXI (Feb. 7, 1962), 1.

selves wandering in darkness with a cry similar to Shakespeare's Macbeth (V) :

To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,  
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,  
To the last syllable of recorded time;  
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools  
The way of dusty death. Out, out brief candle!  
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player  
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage  
And then is heard no more: it is a tale  
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,  
Signifying nothing.

The view of life presented in Holy Scriptures offers an adequate alternative to this death and darkness. In the words addressed to God by the Psalmist: "For with thee is the fountain of life; in thy light do we see light" (36:9). From this perspective the Christian faith points to "the word of life" (I John 1:1).

But the biblical picture language needs interpretation, so that it will speak to the present philosophical situation. Here we find an interesting convergence of concerns. Evolution and eschatology are often set in opposition, as if one excluded the other, but at one special point creative evolution and biblical eschatology have much in common. The concern for life, as a clue to reality more meaningful than the nature of naturalism or the reason of idealism, furnishes common ground for the consideration of human destiny.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, in *The Phenomenon of Man* (1959), relates the process of life to the Supreme Being, which he calls the Omega point. His distinction between the tangential and radial forms of energy recalls Bergson's *élan vital*, but it is worked out with greater precision. The former is identified with the outward form of the process, and the latter with the inner aspect. It is the radial energy that directs the process toward the Omega point, the point at which the consummation is reached. The levels of matter, life, and mind are named by a series of more sophisticated terms: lithosphere, biosphere, noosphere. Life is latent even in the inanimate sphere, but it emerges as vegetation and animals under creative conditions never repeated. Out of life comes mind, the sphere of man.

Christ is the center of the process, and the consummation. In summary:

Christ, principle of universal vitality because sprung up as man among men, put himself in the position (maintained ever since) to subdue under himself, to purify, to direct and superanimate the general ascent of consciousness into which he inserted himself. By a perennial act of communion and sublimation, he aggregates to himself the total psychism of the earth. And when he has gathered everything together and transformed everything, he will close in upon himself and his conquests, thereby rejoining, in a final gesture, the divine focus he has never left. Then, as St. Paul tells us, *God shall be all in all*. This is indeed a superior form of 'pantheism' without trace of the poison of adulteration or annihilation: the expectation of perfect unity, steeped in which each element will reach its consummation at the same time as the universe.<sup>2</sup>

"Panentheism," all in God, perhaps expresses his idea more than the phrase "superior pantheism."

The symbol of the tree of life reminds man that God is the true center of his human existence. The tree is "in the midst of the garden" (Gen. 2:9). The tangled problem of the two trees need not turn one away from the truth of the present form of the paradise story. Man, having eaten of the tree of knowledge, is very wise, but he has been cut off from the source of life by his sin and is mortal. He has been driven from the garden and a flaming sword guards "the way to the tree of life" lest man in his sin live forever (3:22, 24). This is the picture of primeval life from which man has been severed by sin.

Practical life is also symbolized by the tree of life. Wisdom "is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her" (Prov. 3:18). Those who are wise are righteous, and "the mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life" as "a gentle tongue is a tree of life" (10:11; 15:4). "Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a desire fulfilled is a tree of life" (13:12). The deeper desire

<sup>2</sup> Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *The Phenomenon of Man*, tr. Bernard Wall (New York: Harper, 1959), p. 294. A Roman Catholic eschatology that has achieved the status of a classic has been written along the lines of Teilhard, but it came to my attention too late to incorporate into this study. See Alois Winkelhofer, *The Coming of His Kingdom* (Edinburgh — London: Nelson, 1963). Certain philosophical and dogmatic presuppositions keep Roman Catholic scholars, some of whom are quoted favorably at places in this volume, from a complete biblical eschatology.

is fulfilled in the potential life, the possibilities awaiting the redeemed soul.

Those who overcome are "to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God" (Rev. 2:7). In the New Jerusalem the tree of life, located on both sides of "the river of the water of life," bears fruit each month, "and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations" (22:1f.). Those who have "the right to the tree of life" are those who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb (22:14). The part or share that one has in the tree of life can be taken away (22:19). Philosophical and picture language alike know that participation in life is the only escape from death. It is pedantic to push the picture language aside in order to sound more learned.

The symbol of the book of life represents God's sovereignty over human destiny. In the place of fatalistic determinism the personal concern of God appears. In ancient cities the names of citizens were enrolled in a book for various purposes, even as God has a special concern for those "whose names are in the book of life" (Phil. 4:3). God has a general concern for men, and this may also be described as a book (Ps. 56:8; 139:16), but the book of life has reference not so much to earthly life as to eternal life. The eternal life is persevering life and those who overcome are promised that they will be clad in white garments of immortality and that their names will not be blotted "out of the book of life" (Rev. 3:5). Names can be blotted out (Exod. 32:33; Ps. 69:28).

It is also a predestined life, and those who possess it will not be deceived by the enemies of God. Those who are led astray manifest that they are among those whose names have "not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that was slain" (Rev. 13:8, cf. 17:8). Ultimately it is a purified life (21:27). At the final judgment those whose names are missing from the divine register are cast into the lake of fire, the second death (20:12, 15). Only the purified can enter the city of God (21:22-27). This chapter examines these two contrasting modes of life, the earthly and the eternal, primarily in terms of the biblical evidence.

#### EARTHLY LIFE

*The Fountain of Life.* Man in his historical existence is a living soul: "God formed man of the dust of the ground, and

breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. 2:7, ASV). This has reference to both the collective soul, which includes such units as a tribe or a family, and the individual soul of every man. The living soul is "the living and acting being of its possessor," whether the possessor be a group or a person.<sup>3</sup> The main lines of the biblical view of the living soul are implicit in this passage.

As a modern poet has phrased the conception of the individual soul, man is kin to the clod and God.

Great arm-fellow of God!  
To the ancestral clod  
Kin,  
And to cherubin.<sup>4</sup>

*Nephesh* (soul) is the most common and comprehensive term in the Old Testament to describe the totality of man in his historical existence. Man does not receive a soul; he is a soul. Breath (*neshamah*) is blown into dust (*aphar*), and a vital and active soul exists. In primitive Hebrew thought the idea of the principle of life is predominately the picture presented by *nephesh*. This vital force of the total personality is manifest in all the life of man, the penitent, the emotional, the religious. The priestly part of the Old Testament speaks of a dead *nephesh* (Hag. 2:13; Lev. 19:28; 21:1; 22:4; Num. 5:2; 6:6, 11; 9:6, 7, 10; 19:11, 13), but this is obscured by the translation "dead body." The Old Testament has no other word for man's body. When the *nephesh* departs one is dead (Gen. 35:18), and when it returns one is alive again (I Kings 17:22). This, however, does not mean that the Old Testament speaks of a disembodied *nephesh*, although the *nephesh* may be described as being in him (Hab. 2:4).<sup>5</sup>

The physical substance of which man is made is flesh (*basar*). It is that which men and animals have but God does not have.

The Egyptians are men, and not God;

and their horses are flesh, and not spirit (Isa. 31:3).

Flesh is the boundary between living souls and the living God.

<sup>3</sup> A. Murtonen, *The Living Soul* (Helsinki: Finnish Oriental Society, 1958), p. 76. For a similar view in a very different setting see J. G. Bennett, *Christian Mysticism and Subud* (London: The Institute for the Comparative Study of History, Philosophy and the Sciences, 1961), pp. 58ff.

<sup>4</sup> Francis Thompson, *Any Saint*.

<sup>5</sup> Aubrey R. Johnson, *The Vitality of the Individual in the Thought of Ancient Israel* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1949), pp. 7-26.

It includes all mankind (Gen. 6:12), or all animals (7:15f.), or both (6:17).

Man in his special relation to God is spirit (*ruach*). It expresses man's complete dependence on God for life. Isaiah 42:5 says:

Thus says God, the Lord,  
Who created the heavens and  
stretched them out,  
Who spread forth the earth and  
what comes from it,  
Who gives breath to the people upon it  
and spirit to those who walk in it.

Job declares: "The spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life" (33:4). When God takes away His *ruach* things die, but when He sends it forth they are created (Ps. 104:29f.). Even heaven and the heavenly hosts are created by God's Spirit (33:6). At death "the dust returns to the earth as it was, and spirit returns to God who gave it" (Eccl. 12:7). Spirit is the point of contact between God and man.

God is spirit and man receives his human spirit from God, but the Spirit of God is not to be identified with the spirit of man. In post-Kantian idealism "the spirit in man was interpreted as an immanence of the Holy Spirit."<sup>6</sup> Hegel looked upon the human spirit as the manifestation of the divine Spirit in a manner which blurred the boundary between God and man.

It is at this point that one of the weakest points in Karl Barth's doctrine of man becomes evident, a factor which throws light on his vehement denunciation of Emil Brunner's insistence that a point of contact between God and man is found in man even in his sin. Barth expounds man as "besouled body and bodily soul," but he asserts that man only *has* spirit. He so clearly identifies the human spirit with the Holy Spirit that natural man is left with no spirit at all. That is why, following Calvin, he can reach the unbiblical conclusion: "The spirit is immortal."<sup>7</sup> This argument may claim

<sup>6</sup> George S. Hendry, *The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1956), p. 101.

<sup>7</sup> *Church Dogmatics*, tr. Harold Knight, *et. al.* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1960), III/2, p. 355. Cf. John Calvin, *Institutes* tr. Henry Beveridge (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957), I, XV. I.

Plato, but not Paul; and Barth's tortuous theological grinding is unable to make the Scriptures conform to this speculation. John A. T. Robinson claims that the human spirit is only "shorthand" for the Spirit of God and that natural man has "no spirit of his own."<sup>8</sup> This view has become so rooted in Christian thought that Eduard Schweizer's discussion of *pneuma* in the New Testament takes the position that the spirit is always something laid upon man.<sup>9</sup>

On the basis of Kierkegaard's attack against idealism, and buttressed by careful biblical studies, a very different view has been advanced. According to Arnold B. Come, "spirit" may be considered both objectively and subjectively. Objectively, spirit is the union of body and soul, and therefore may be identified with the contemporary concept of "self" or "person."<sup>10</sup> Subjectively, spirit "is man in his very manhood," "the realization of man's soulish dimension in the somatic unity of personality."<sup>11</sup> The human spirit is "man's own inner capacity and power to become or to realize his full and ideal self."<sup>12</sup> This requires a further distinction between the human spirit as potentiality and as actuality. The human spirit is man's self-transcendence, which provides the possibility of freedom and love, a capacity which is mere potentiality until it becomes actual as man becomes a person in relation to the Person which is God. This concept of humanity leaves man torn between potentiality and actuality, between what Emil Brunner called the formal and material image of God.<sup>13</sup> The human spirit is "the point of contact" between God and man, and man and man in the community of love.

In the light of this debate it seems better to look upon man as a living soul who *has* body and *has* spirit, although he has his own body and spirit in distinction from God. It is soul that constitutes the positive unity between body and spirit, but it is man's body that is to become a spiritual body as he now is a living soul. Flesh relates man to all that is not God, soul to all living things, and spirit to all persons and the Person of

8 *In the End, God* (London: James Clarke, 1950), p. 84.

9 *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel (hereafter TWNT), VI, 433f.

10 *Human Spirit and Holy Spirit* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1959), p. 37.

11 *Ibid.*, p. 54.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 74.

13 *Ibid.*, pp. 94f.

God. Yet a clear distinction must be made between the human spirit and the Holy Spirit.

A brief analysis of the Pauline writings supports the conclusion that man *has his own spirit*. The very first reference is a prayer that "spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Thess. 5:23). The benediction says: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit" (Phil. 4:23; cf. Gal. 6:18; II Tim. 4:22; Phil. 25).

How is it possible to draw an analogy between "the spirit of the man" and "the Spirit of God" if the two are the same (I Cor. 2:11)? Paul's spirit can be present in Corinth as the church delivers an immoral man to Satan "for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (5:3-5). If the human spirit were the Holy Spirit no distinction could be made between Paul's spirit and the other man's spirit. The unmarried are primarily concerned "to be holy in body and spirit" (7:34). An unholy Holy Spirit is impossible. When a man prays in tongues his *pneuma* prays, but his *nous* (mind) is unfruitful (14:14). Friends refreshed Paul's spirit as well as the spirits of the people of Corinth (16:18), but this is impossible if there are no separate human spirits.

Both the body and the spirit can be cleansed from defilement (II Cor. 7:1), but how can this be if the human spirit is the Holy Spirit? Paul's spirit (*pneuma*) could not rest until he found Titus (2:13), and all Christians may be renewed in the "spirit of their minds" (Eph. 4:23). The phrase "the spirit of your minds" may be considered a summary of the human spirit in the Scriptures. In Romans 8:10 the human spirit is said to be alive because of righteousness in contrast to the body which is dead because of sin, and the same chapter speaks of the witness of God's Spirit with our spirit "that we are the children of God" (8:16).

Perhaps it should be added that Hebrews speaks of "the division of soul and spirit" (4:12), "the Father of spirits" (12:9), and "the spirits of just men made perfect" (12:23). This plural use of "spirits" would be meaningless if the human spirits are not to be distinguished from the Holy Spirit. If natural man does not have a human spirit then he is physically dead, for "the body apart from the spirit is dead" (Jas.

2:26). Man is a living soul, and the severance of the human spirit from the human body is physical death.

The living soul thirsts for the living God. The dryness of the soul cries out (Ps. 42:1f.) :

As a hart longs for flowing streams,  
so longs my soul for thee, O God.

My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.  
When shall I come and behold the face of God?

This dependence of the living soul upon the living God is expressed in several ways. The reverence with which man must approach God is a recognition that He is the source of life. "For who is there of all flesh, that has heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of fire, as we have, and has still lived?" (Deut. 5:26).

The terrible holiness of the living God finds full expression in the New Testament, especially in Hebrews. The evil heart of unbelief leads one "to fall away from the living God" (3:12), and "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (10:31). Christ purifies the "conscience from dead works to serve the living God" (9:14), and Mount Zion is "the city of the living God" (12:22).

The renewal of man rests on his return to the living God. Apart from God man faints (Ps. 84:2) :

My soul longs, yea, faints for the courts of the Lord;  
my heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God.

Repentance is turning "to God from idols, to serve a living and true God" (I Thess. 1:9), and the missionary message is a call to "turn from these vain things to a living God" (Acts 14:15). When man turns to God he becomes a letter from Christ "written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God" (II Cor. 3:3). The people of God are "the temple of the living God" (6:16), "the church of the living God" (I Tim. 3:15). The redeemed of both the old and the new covenant are called "sons of the living God" (Hos. 1:10; Rom. 9:26). An early hymn sums up (I Tim. 4:10) :

For to this end we toil and strive,  
because we have our hope set on the living God,  
who is the Savior of all men.

The rule of God in the affairs of men reveals man's dependence on Him. His earthly rule enables Him to be in the midst of His people when they drive their enemies out of the land (Josh. 3:10). The armies of Israel may even be called

“the armies of the living God” (I Sam. 17:26, 36), and those who mock Israel “mock the living God” (II Kings 19:4, 16; Isa. 37:4, 17). The eternal rule of the living God rests upon His eternal kingship (Jer. 10:10):

But the Lord is the true God;  
he is the living God and the everlasting King.  
At his wrath the earth quakes,  
and the nations cannot endure his indignation.

Daniel was the servant of the living God (Dan. 6:20), and King Darius wrote a decree that all men should fear the God of Daniel (6:26):

for he is the living God, enduring forever;  
his kingdom shall never be destroyed,  
and his dominion shall be to the end.

God is “the fountain of living waters” (Jer. 2:13; 17:13), and those who forsake the Lord turn away from the fountain. As the Psalm has put it (36:9):

For with thee is the fountain of life;  
in thy light do we see light.

Out of this fountain, the source of life for the living soul, flows the fullness of life from the living God. He is “the God of the spirits of all flesh” (Num. 27:16).

*The Fullness of Life.* Earthly life may be a full life.<sup>14</sup> This fullness is at times described in quantitative terms: “that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God gives you” (Exod. 20:12). In a deeper sense the full life is qualitative (Ps. 16:11):

Thou dost show me the path of life;  
in thy presence there is fulness of joy,  
in thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.

The two are at times together, “for length of days and years of life and abundant welfare will they give you” (Prov. 3:2).

The nation may enjoy this full life by obedience to the command of God. Seeking the Lord is the only sure way for the people to survive in the land (Amos 5:4, 6, 14; Hos. 6:2). This promise that God will give a long life in the land is a characteristic of the book of Deuteronomy (4:1, 40; 5:30; 6:8; 8:11; 11:8f.; 16:20; 25:15; 30:15-20; 32:47).

Deuteronomy 30:15-20 is a good summary of this point of view:

<sup>14</sup> Franz Muszner, *Zōē* (München: Karl Zink, 1952), pp. 3-8.

See, I have set before you this day life and good, death and evil. If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you this day, by loving the Lord your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his ordinances, then you shall live and multiply, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land which you are entering to take possession of it. But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, I declare to you this day, that you shall perish; you shall not live long in the land which you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess. I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse; therefore choose life, that you and your descendants may live, loving the Lord your God, obeying his voice, and cleaving to him; for that means life to you and length of days, that you may dwell in the land which the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.

The theme of life for the righteous is continued in the prophetic call to choose between "the way of life and the way of death" (Jer. 21:8). Habakkuk 2:4 is the call: "Behold, he whose soul is not upright in him shall fail, but the righteous shall live by his faith." It is the watchman's duty to call the people from transgression to life (Ezek. 33), and the hope of restoration is rooted in the reward of God to the righteous (Ezek. 37).

The fullness of life for the righteous individual is promised even when the nation forgets God. God deals justly with the individual even when the nation fails to keep the covenant. Jeremiah 31 had based the new covenant on the rejection of the popular proverb: "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge" (Jer. 31:29), and Ezekiel expands this into the promise of life for the righteous individual (18:1-32).

Psalm 91:14-16 is a good statement of this second point of view:

Because he cleaves to me in love, I will  
    deliver him;  
I will protect him, because he knows  
    my name.  
When he calls to me, I will answer him;  
    I will be with him in trouble,  
    I will rescue him and honor him.  
With long life I will satisfy him,  
    and show him my salvation.

Yet the long life of Israel in the land and the long life of the individual, even when it is filled with peace and joy, do not satisfy the thirst for life. Earthly life with all its fullness requires eternal life to be full of ultimate meaning.

### ETERNAL LIFE

The longing for eternal life is as universal as earthly life itself. At times this desire to live reaches a consuming crescendo, as in the lines of G. A. Studdert-Kennedy, when he said:

I want to live, live out, not wobble through  
 My life somehow, and then into the dark.  
 I must have God. This life's too dull without,  
 Too dull for aught but suicide.<sup>15</sup>

It is to those who seek unto suicide that God, the Eternal One, becomes the fountain of life, here and hereafter, the one who alone can quench the thirst which cannot be satisfied with a few short and fitful years.

The phrase *zoē aiōnios* (eternal life) is first found in the LXX (Septuagint) version of Daniel 12:2, and there it is linked with the apocalyptic hope that God will raise the righteous dead for everlasting life as He will raise the wicked to everlasting contempt. It is the hope of the *chasidim*, the godly. In the blooming time of this hope it offers life both as a future promise and as a present possession, or, to put it in a famous German phrase, it is *hoffen und haben* (hoping and having).<sup>16</sup>

*Eternal Life as a Future Promise.* Eternal life as promise is the "hope of eternal life which God, who never lies, promised ages ago and at the proper time manifested in his word" (Titus 1:3). With joy the early Christians came to baptism in the belief that it was the bath of regeneration which initiated them into a spiritual process which pointed to the promise that death could not sever their relation to Christ. Baptism was the Red Sea crossing that had meaning because it was the beginning of the journey to the promised land. Titus 3:5-7 preserves one of the early hymns expressing this hope:

. . . by the washing of regeneration  
 and renewal in the Holy Spirit,  
 which he poured out upon us richly

15 *The Best of G. A. Studdert-Kennedy* (New York: Harper, 1948), p. 147.

16 TWNT, V, 868; *Weltkirchen Lexikon*, ed. Franklin Littell, Hans Hermann Walz (Stuttgart: Kreuz, 1960), p. 361.

through Jesus Christ our Savior,  
so that we might be justified by his grace  
and become heirs in hope  
of eternal life.

The promise of life is framed as a picture of two ages, the present evil age and the coming age when hope becomes a reality. The Lord Jesus Christ "gave himself for our sins to deliver us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father" (Gal. 1:4). This great salvation already offers a taste of "the powers of the age to come" (Heb. 6:5). It is this life between the ages, the New Exodus of the new life, that gave meaning to the Old Testament in the faith of the New Testament. The ancient Exodus found deeper significance in the spiritual experiences that transformed the promised land into a promised life.<sup>17</sup> As Paul put it: "Now these things happened to them as a warning, but they were written down for our instruction, upon whom the end of the ages has come" (I Cor. 10:11). Even in the Old Testament some of this significance was seen.

The beatitudes are balanced on the concept of the two ages (Matt. 5:1-12). As Moses had ten commandments so Christ has ten blessings. Each blessing is a pilgrim promise, the first part of which has to do with the present evil age and the second part with the age to come. The poor to whom the kingdom of heaven is promised are the pious poor portrayed as those who look to God for vindication (Ps. 9:18; 10:9; 12:5; 34:6). Those who mourn in this present evil age are to be comforted in "the year of the Lord's favor" when all the oppressed are set free (Isa. 61:2). The meek who are to inherit the earth represent the meek of Psalm 37:11 who are to inherit the promised land in the messianic age. They are meek like Moses (Num. 12:3). Those who hunger in the wilderness of this world are happy in the hope that they will awake and be satisfied in beholding the form of God (Ps. 17:15). The righteous repose on the promised reward.

Those who show mercy in this harsh world will obtain mercy in the world to come (Matt. 18:33). The pure in heart, those who have a single purpose to do God's will, will be rewarded in the age to come by looking upon the face of God (Ps.

17 George A. F. Knight, *A Christian Theology of the Old Testament* (Richmond: John Knox, 1959) pp. 160-166.

42:2). Peacemakers, those who promote personal and social well-being in the present age, will be gathered again as "sons of the living God" (Hos. 1:10). The persecuted, those who adhere to righteousness at the risk of their lives, will be rewarded with "the kingdom of heaven." The reviled, loyal to Christ against all abusive language, are happy in the hope that their destiny is the destiny of Christ. The tenth saying is a call for the disciples to shout for joy as they remember their "reward is great in heaven." The present tense in Matthew 5:3 ("for theirs is the kingdom of heaven") is as future as the present tense in Matthew 5:12 ("for your reward is great in heaven"). All ten sayings are best understood in the pattern of the promise of the coming age, the condition of the present evil age in contrast to the consolation of the age to come. All ten promises are synonyms for eternal life.

In the Synoptic Gospels eternal life belongs to the age to come. The age to come is the messianic age of the future (Matt. 12:32; Mark 10:30; Luke 18:30; 16:8; 20:34). Eternal life in the age to come is of greater value than all earthly riches, and the righteous soul would be more concerned about this inheritance than all other possessions (Mark 10:17-31; Matt. 19:16-30; Luke 18:18-30). In Mark the reply to the question, "Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" employs the phrases "treasure in heaven," "enter the kingdom of God," and "in the age to come" (10:17, 21, 23, 25, 30), all of which are clearly future. Matthew 25:46 contrasts "eternal life" with "eternal punishment." As the punishment is future, so is the life.

The Pauline Epistles also have reference to eternal life as a future promise, but the frame of reference is more in terms of the two Adams than of the two ages. Eternal life is reaped as the result of spiritual sowing, the outcome of a process which includes the whole of life. "Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption; but he who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. And let us not grow weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we do not lose heart" (Gal. 6:7-9). On "the day of wrath" God will "give eternal life" to all "who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality" (Rom. 2:5-7). Eternal life is a gift, received as the

outcome (*telos*) of the spiritual process, in contrast to death as the wages of sin (6:21-23).

This spiritual process perfected as eternal life is operative "in Christ": "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive" (I Cor. 15:22). "Law came in, to increase the trespass; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 5:20f.). In Christ "the law of the Spirit of life" emancipates from "the law of sin and death," an accomplishment impossible for the law of Moses (8:1-4). The mind of the Spirit brings life and peace in contrast to the death and hostility so characteristic of mind organized around its self-centered sentiments (8:5-8). The indwelling of the Spirit will give life to our mortal bodies according to the power that raised Jesus from the dead (8:9-11). Two types of lives are possible: one lived according to the flesh and which leads to death, the other according to the Spirit and leading to life (8:12f.). In Romans 8:1-27 Paul relates to life four of the eight great teachings on the Spirit operative in vital union with Christ. The whole life related to Christ flowers in the life eternal. Eternal life is the fruit of faith, the reward of a good fight (I Tim. 1:16; 6:12). We "wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" (Jude 21).

In the final analysis eternal life is the only real life. Man either enters life or goes to Gehenna (Mark 9:43, 45; Matt. 18:8f.). He either travels the narrow road "that leads to life" or the broad road "that leads to destruction" (Matt. 7:13f.). Eternal life is the life which "is hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3), and the manifestation of Christ in glory as the manifestation of the life in God. Godliness "holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come" (I Tim. 4:8), and the rich are to lay "up for themselves a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life which is life indeed" (6:19). God gives the "promise of the life which is in Christ Jesus" (II Tim. 1:1), the Saviour "who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (1:10). In the book of Revelation eternal life is promised in four figures: "the crown of life" (2:10), "the book of life" (3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27), "the tree of life" (2:7; 22:14; 22:19), and "the water of life" (21:6; 22:1; 22:17).

*Eternal Life as a Present Possession.* Eternal life may also be a present possession. This is a characteristic of the Johannine writings, but some indication of this is found in other parts of the New Testament. Those who believed have died and their lives are "hid with Christ in God" so that when Christ who is their "life" appears they will appear with Him in glory (Col. 3:3f.). The unbelievers are "alienated from the life of God" (Eph. 4:18), and this indicates the best definition of eternal life: "the life of God," the life that comes from the Eternal One. Mention is made also of the "promise for the present life and also for the life to come" (I Tim. 4:8), but it is not certain that the "present life" here is the same as eternal life.

The manifestation of the life of eternity in the realm of darkness and death, the transient and the temporal, is God's special revelation of Himself in Jesus Christ. The diffused light of creation is focused and radiated through Jesus Christ. In the concrete manifestation of the incarnation the possibility of Christian fellowship becomes a reality.

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life — the life was made manifest, and we saw it, and testify to it, and proclaim to you the eternal life which was with the Father and was made manifest to us — that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you may have fellowship with us; and our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ (I John 1:1-3).

Our common life (*koinōnia*) is created by participation in the very life of God.

Participation in this manifest life is participation in light, in the truth of God that has dawned in this world of darkness (I John 1:5-7). This experience of enlightenment has ethical implications that make the future revelation at the *parousia* a present reality (2:8). The future is present now for those who believe the promise. "Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you will abide in the Son and in the Father. And this is what he has promised us, eternal life" (2:24f.). This is "realized eschatology" but not the type that removes the future *parousia* when the hidden reality appears (2:28).

Participation in eternal life is also participation in love. He who has God's life manifests God's love (3:14-17). God's life and God's love are so linked that abiding in one is abiding in the other (4:7f.). The mission of the Son is the manifestation of the life, light, and love of God.

Separation from eternal life is death. That is why denial of Christ is the rejection of life (5:11f.). Belief in Christ is the knowledge that we have eternal life (5:13), and to cut oneself off from Christ is to forfeit eternal life, and this is the meaning of "mortal sin" or "the sin unto death" (5:16f.). Those who depart from the *koinōnia* (fellowship) and return back to the *kosmos* (world) are the present "antichrists" who "went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out, that it might be plain that they all are not of us" (2:19). The true believers are those who abide in Christ and endure to the end; to depart from the fellowship in Christ is to sever oneself from the source of eternal life. True faith is knowledge of the true God. "This is the true God and eternal life" (5:20).

The mediation of eternal life from God to men calls forth a series of at least seven symbols in the Gospel of John. As the Word, the Son is the source of eternal life with relations to both God and the world.<sup>18</sup> His relation to God is set forth in the first stanza of the hymn to the Logos (John 1:1f.):

In the beginning was the Word,  
and the Word was with God,  
and the Word was God.

He was in the beginning with God.

Stanza two states the relation to the world (1:3f.):

All things were made through him,  
and without him was not anything made  
that has been made. In him was life,  
and the life was the light of men.

With relations to both God and the world He is the mediator of life from God to the world of men.

The word which goes forth from Him creates eternal life in all who hear. "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears my word and believes him who sent me, has eternal life; he does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to

<sup>18</sup> Rudolf Bultmann, *Johannesevangelium* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1950), pp. 5, 19.

life" (5:24). This is "the hour" that "is coming and now is" when men are called out of spiritual death to a spiritual life, inherent in the Father and the Son, but mediated to men (5:25ff.). There remains the hour that "is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come forth, those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment" (5:28-29).

With the water of life Christ quenches the thirst for the eternal. The eternal life is "the living water" which, in contrast to the superficial religion of ceremonialism, becomes "a spring of water welling up to eternal life" (4:10, 14). The dwelling in tents celebrated by the Feast of Tabernacles not only symbolized the coming of the Word to dwell in human flesh but also the living waters given in the wilderness of this world. At the Feast of Tabernacles, when the libation was poured out, Jesus cried (7:37f.):

If any one is thirsty, let him come to me;  
whoever believes in me, let him drink (NEB).

Jesus points out that this is the fulfillment of the Scripture which says: "Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water" (7:38), and this was fulfilled when the Spirit of God was poured out after the crucifixion. With this arrangement of the text it becomes clear that Jesus is the rock smitten in the wilderness, out of whom the living waters flow.

As the bread of life Jesus satisfies the hunger of the world for the eternal. On the occasion of the bread miracle, when five thousand were fed, the Jewish Passover provides the background for interpreting Jesus as the imperishable bread. In the form of a Jewish Passover *Haggadah*, delivered as a discourse in the synagogue at Capernaum, the relation of the sacramental principle to the spiritual principle is described in the pattern of the descent and ascent of the Son of God.<sup>19</sup> The sacramental principle, understood as the revelation of the higher realm of spirit in the lower realm of flesh, is introduced as a sign pointing to "the food which endures to eternal life"

19 The literary problems of John 6 have been discussed according to the *Haggadah* hypothesis by Bertil Gärtner, *John 6 and the Jewish Passover* (Lund: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1959). A major contribution to the understanding of the whole Gospel against the background of the triennial cycle of the ancient synagogue has been made by Aileen Guilding, *The Fourth Gospel and Jewish Worship* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1960).

(John 6:27). The descent of the Son "gives life to the world" (6:33) in a fashion impossible through the manna of Moses.

The relation between the present possession of eternal life and the promise of a future resurrection at the last day rules out the possibility that the Fourth Gospel has abandoned the traditional future hope for a revised or "realized eschatology" of the present (6:39f., 44, 45). Only violent exegesis can uproot the resurrection at the last day. The balance between the descent and the ascent removes also the theory that the sacramental and the spiritual principle of the Lord's Supper clash. As the Son ascends where He was before, "the spirit that gives life" is given to remind that "the flesh is of no avail" apart from the words which "are spirit and life" (6:63).

Eternal life is no automatic transaction that operates apart from the proclamation of the Word and the hearing of faith. The Lord's Supper is a sign, a symbol on the lower level to point to the higher level of spirit. The betrayal of Judas is a shocking example of how turning away from Christ forfeits eternal life (6:66-71; 13:1-11; 15:1-6; 17:12). Peter portrays those who persevere, but traditional Calvinism has too often overlooked Saul and Judas while it pointed to David and Peter. It is the persevering faith of Peter, not the temporary faith of Judas, that possesses eternal life now and for all the future. John 6 holds in balance the sacramental and the spiritual, the present and the future, perseverance and apostasy.

The light of life, along with the water of life, is linked with the Feast of Tabernacles.<sup>20</sup> The discourse in John 8:12-59 opens with the words: "I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." The debate centers around the word *alētheia* (truth), a Greek word which means "that which is not hidden." Light and truth are related as are darkness and the lie. Repeatedly this idea is hammered home: "my testimony is true" (8:14); "my judgment is true" (8:16); "the testimony of two men is true" (8:17); "he who sent me is true" (8:26); "you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free" (8:32); "but now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth" (8:40); the devil "has nothing to do with the truth, because there is no truth in him" (8:44); "If I tell the truth, why do you not believe me?" (8:46). Jesus is the truth that delivers men

20 Guilding, *op. cit.*, pp. 92-120.

from the darkness of death into "the light of life." The discourse is followed immediately with the story of the man born blind, a detailed sign of the process by which "the light of the world" destroys the blindness of this realm of darkness and death.

The good shepherd who "lays down his life for the sheep" is the theme based on the Feast of Dedication in John 10. On the Sabbath nearest to this feast the lections included readings concerning God as the shepherd of Israel, and this becomes the basis of Jesus' discourse at this *Hanukkah*.<sup>21</sup> The good shepherd is no hireling who flees when the wolf comes, but gives his life for the sake of His sheep that both Jew and Gentile may, by hearing His voice, become "one flock" with "one shepherd" (10:11-18). His sheep receive eternal life when they hear His voice and follow Him, and those who do not believe manifest that they are not His sheep. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand" (10:27f.).

The life which He mediates to men is made available by the laying down of His life, but it is not received until men hear His voice and follow Him. Apart from the good shepherd the sheep have no eternal life, here or hereafter. Only those in the sheepfold are safe from the wolf. This does not contradict what has been said about Judas. Judas was lost because he left the fold. He represents those who "could not believe" (12:39), even though they followed for a while.

As the resurrection and the life, the theme of resurrection is even more closely related to the present possession of eternal life. Around the reading on death, included in the synagogue readings for the seventh *Shebat*, the triumph of life over death is celebrated.<sup>22</sup> Lazarus represents death, the destroyer of all that is life and joy. Some comfort is found in the traditional doctrine of the Pharisees that "he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day," but Jesus, without rejecting the belief in a future resurrection, promises a present life with the quality of eternity. "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die" (11:25). A deeper

21 *Ibid.*, pp. 127-142.

22 *Ibid.*, pp. 143-153.

dimension, the idea of a new life in the new age, is disclosed, but the idea of sleep until the resurrection is not denied. Tradition has been transformed by new truth.

As "the way" Jesus is also "the truth" and "the life" (John 14:6). Those who walk in the way live in vital union with Him who said: "Yet a little while, and the world will see me no more, but you will see me; because I live, you will live also" (14:19). This fellowship of those who share the eternal life is eschatological in that the risen Christ will bring to them a foretaste of the mystic communion of the new age. That is the significance of the words of Jesus when He said: "In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you" (14:20). The relation is also ethical, and those who experience the communion keep the commandments of love, the commandments which are the very essence of the fellowship of eternal life (14:21).

Eternal life is mediated to men as a gift, and the appropriation of life is an act of receiving (1:12). Receiving is more frequently described as believing (3:15f., 36; 5:24; 6:40, 47; 11:26; 20:31), a word that always appears as a verb of action in the Fourth Gospel. This act is a continuous trust in Christ, the source of eternal life, and eternal life is never possessed by those who have ceased believing.

The static notion of a once-for-all assent to some proposition is missing entirely in the dynamic personal relations proclaimed in this Gospel. Eternal life is gathered as the gleaners gather fruit from the field, a process of sowing and reaping (4:36). It is hearing the word, the source of life, and those who do not hear do not live (5:24). It is coming to Christ to receive the life offered in Him, and one can search the Scriptures for this life and fail to find it (5:39f.). It is a process of eating, as men eat bread to sustain earthly life, and those who do not eat perish of hunger (6:50, 51, 54, 68). Finally, the act of appropriation is knowing God. This is briefly stated in the prayer of Jesus: "And this is eternal life, that they may know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent" (17:3).

The relevance of the Christian belief in eternal life to the existential meditation on death presents creative conversation more realistic than the blending of biblical thought with philosophical idealism. Eternal life is the opposite not of temporal life but of eternal death. A dynamic dualism of darkness and

light, hate and love, flesh and spirit, death and life sound similar to Karl Heim's distinction between the polar and the supra-polar. "He who loves his life (*psychē*) loses it, and he who hates his life (*psychē*) in this world will keep it for eternal life (*zoē*)" (12:25). In this world (*kosmos*), the fallen creation of polarity, the natural life (*psychē*) is lost if it is not kept for eternal life (*zoē*).<sup>23</sup>

23 Helpful guidance for further study of eternal life may be found in Baron Friedrich von Hügel, *Eternal Life* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1912, 1913); John Baillie, *And the Life Everlasting* (London: Oxford University Press, 1934); Edwin Kenneth Lee, *The Religious Thought of St. John* (London: S.P.C.K., 1950), pp. 191-204; Alf. Corell, *Consummatum Est* (New York: Macmillan, 1958), pp. 139-150; TWNT, II, pp. 833-874.

### *Chapter Three*

## Death

DEATH WEARS a double face. On *this* side it is destruction, a severance of man from all that is life; but from the *other* side it is a departure, a service of man to God. Judgment and grace meet in the death of a believer as they do in a perfect manner in the death of Christ. Obedience unto death, in *Him* and in us, holds the two together. Alienation from God may focus the judgment of God so that man's life is shattered and severed from all meaning, while fellowship with God transforms the transition into a priestly libation to God (Phil. 2:17; II Tim. 4:6). However, for those who recognize that our lives are in the hands of God, it is never one without the other.

Of sinners justified by grace it may be said: "Death is never punishment only, but it is always also that. Death is at no time only grace, but for those who believe it is always also that. Death is in no case only a call to sacrifice to the love of God, but it is always also that."<sup>1</sup> Man is surrounded by the destructive powers of death, and through them he must pass to get to God. A flaming sword guards the way to the tree of life. Death as destruction and death as departure are discussed in order, but in experience they come together. "For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (II Cor. 5:1).

### DEATH AS DESTRUCTION (*Katalysis*)

*The Realm of the Dead.* Death is the great destroyer. It is the disembodiment of man in his historical and earthly ex-

<sup>1</sup> Paul Althaus, *Die letzten Dinge* (Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1949), p. 89.

istence, the severance of the self from its organ of expression with a variety of words that furnish a clue to the Biblical understanding of the state of the dead. The most significant word is *Sheol*, a word of uncertain origin but used sixty-five times in the Old Testament. Some think it is derived from the verb *sha'al*, meaning "to ask," and related to the practice of necromancy. Appeal for this view may be made to I Samuel 28:1-19, although the word *Sheol* does not appear. Another view relates it to the word *sho'al*, meaning "the hollow beneath the earth."

In post-biblical Hebrew, *sha'al* means the deep of the sea, and some see here the picture of the primordial waters which threaten man with chaos and destruction. Death is viewed as a return to the formless void of *Tehom* (the deep). Some of this idea of *Tehom* is suggested by two synonyms for *Sheol* used after the time of Ezekiel. The word *bor* or pit is at times associated with the primordial waters, even though the ordinary meaning is a hole in the earth. Psalm 88:6f. preserves the picture:

Thou hast put me in the depths of the Pit,  
in the regions dark and deep.  
Thy wrath lies heavy upon me,  
and thou dost overwhelm me  
with all thy waves.

Waters are symbolic of great dangers that overwhelm men in violent destruction (Ps. 42:7; 124:4f.).

Another synonym also translated pit is *shachath*, from *shuach*, to sink down, and it, too, is pictured as the primordial deep. Ezekiel 28:8 says:

They shall thrust you down into the Pit,  
and you shall die the death of the slain  
in the heart of the seas.

The dangers of the deep depict the threat of destruction, the loss of all meaning, and the failure to function according to God's purpose. This chaos is "without form and void," without the structure of meaning and empty of all purpose. It is not extinction, a concept never developed in the Bible, but exclusion from the ultimate purpose of God; yet it is not escape from the presence of God (Ps. 139:8). *Sheol* is under the dominion of God (I Sam. 2:6; Amos 9:2).

*Abaddon*, a word which means destruction, is used in the Old Testament six times for *Sheol*. Job 26:5f. says:

The shades below tremble,  
the waters and their inhabitants.  
Sheol is naked before God,  
and Abaddon has no covering.

In Psalm 88:16f. the danger of destruction is the threat of *Abaddon*:

Thy wrath has swept over me;  
thy dread assaults destroy me.  
They surround me like a flood all day long;  
they close in upon me together.

These terrors of *Tehom*, the dangers of the deep, provide the best picture of what disembodiment in *Sheol* means. Danger, darkness, and despair lurk beneath the deep waters of the formless void. Only the shudder that grips one hurled into the boundless deep can suggest the emotions evoked by the thought of disembodiment in *Sheol*. The loss of the body is the loss of solid ground. Man is "sunk."

The desert was one of the dreadful symbols in the religion of Israel and her neighbors.<sup>2</sup> In the desert theology of the Old Testament this idea of sprawling waste and desolation was an apt symbol of *Sheol* as the realm of the dead (Hos. 13:14):

Shall I ransom them from the power of Sheol?  
Shall I redeem them from Death?  
O Death, where are your plagues?  
O Sheol, where is your destruction?

The plagues and destruction of the desert depict the deprivation that is death, and it is significant that Paul chose this passage in the Old Testament as a picture of the enemy that Christ overcame.

*Hades* in the New Testament preserves much of the Old Testament view of *Sheol*. It is the usual translation of *Sheol* in the LXX, and in the three texts where it is not used *thanatos* (death) appears.<sup>3</sup> *Hades* in relation to men is employed both

<sup>2</sup> Alfred Halder, *The Notion of the Desert in Sumero-Accadian and West-Semitic Religions* (Uppsala: A. B. Lundequistska, 1950). A detailed study of this concept has been done by George H. Williams, *Wilderness and Paradise in Christian Thought* (New York: Harper, 1962), pp. 3-137.

<sup>3</sup> C. Ryder Smith, *The Bible Doctrine of the Hereafter* (London: Epworth, 1958), p. 88.

in a collective and in an individual sense. The whole city of Capernaum can "be brought down to Hades" (Matt. 11:23; Luke 10:15). This clearly reflects the taunt against the king of Babylon in Isaiah 14:13, 15 and adds little to the significance of *Sheol-Hades*. In Luke 16:19-31 only the rich man is seen in *Hades*. Poor Lazarus is across the gulf in Abraham's bosom.

The Old Testament belief that the saint (*chasid*) would not be abandoned to *Sheol* has borne fruit, and *Hades* is left only to the wicked. Typical of the protests of the *chasid* against the destiny of *Sheol* is Psalm 16:10f.

For thou dost not give me up to *Sheol*,  
or let thy godly one see the Pit.  
Thou dost show me the path of life;  
in thy presence there is fulness of joy,  
in thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.

This "emotional reaction" of the *chasid* against *Sheol* has become an "emotional conviction" that God will not abandon the righteous in *Sheol*.<sup>4</sup> It is therefore incorrect to say that *Paradise* is a part of *Hades*. *Hades* is the intermediate abode of the wicked alone. There, even though it is the intermediate state, they taste of the torments of *Gehenna* (Luke 16:23-25).

*Hades* in relation to Christ is also closely related to the protest of the *chasid*. Psalm 16:8-11 is used as the proof text for a part of Peter's Pentecostal sermon in Acts 2:25-28. It is said that the patriarch David spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that He was not abandoned to *Hades*, nor did His flesh see corruption (Acts 2:31). This clearly reflects the theology of the *chasidim* in the light of Christ's conquest over the powers of death. The same may be said of Matthew 16:18, whether we think of "it" (*autēs*) as the rock (*petra*) or the church (*ekklēsia*). *Hades* is pictured as a city with gates in the wall ready to swallow men by the powers of death. If "it" means the *petra* upon which the *ekklēsia* is built, the passage possibly has reference to the resurrection of Christ, who is called *petra* in I Peter 2:8 and I Corinthians 10:4. Matthew 16:21 significantly states that "from that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised." If the more common

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 64.

interpretation that *autēs* has reference to the *ekklēsia* be accepted, it may mean that the powers of death will not swallow up the church, the *chasidim*. On the basis of the Greek language it is possible to take the view that Matthew 16:18, like Acts 2:25-28, has reference to Christ's conquest over the powers of death. Either view leaves the concept of *Hades* about the same.

Christ's conquest over *Hades* is more pronounced in Revelation. In Revelation 1:17b He tells John: "I am the first and the last, and the living one; I died, and behold I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades." In Revelation 6:8 Death and *Hades* are personified as the rider on the pale horse who goes forth "to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and by wild beasts of the earth." The twin riders will not be able to hold the dead forever, for at the final judgment Death and *Hades* will give up the dead and be thrown into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:13f.). All of this symbolized the belief that death is not the true destiny of man and that *Gehenna* is not God's glory. It is the refuse of the rebels. With the new heaven and the new earth "death shall be no more" (21:4).

The place of the dead is only a picture of their state. As *Tehom* furnished the frame for the picture of a disembodied state, so *Rephaim* suggests the conditions of this state. *Rephaim*, the dead, are to be understood as the very opposite of the *Hayyim*, the living. The most vivid description of the *Rephaim* in *Sheol* is found in Isaiah 14:9-15:

Sheol beneath is stirred up  
    to meet you when you come,  
it rouses the shades to greet you,  
    all who were leaders of the earth;  
it raises from their thrones  
    all who were kings of the nations.  
All of them will speak  
    and say to you:  
'You too have become as weak as we!  
    you have become like us!'  
Your pomp is brought down to Sheol,  
    the sound of your harps;  
maggots are the bed beneath you,  
    and worms are your covering.  
How you are fallen from heaven,  
    O Day Star, son of Dawn!

How you are cut down to the ground,  
 you who laid the nations low!  
 You said in your heart,  
 'I will ascend to heaven;  
 above the stars of God  
 I will set my throne on high;  
 I will sit on the mount of assembly  
 in the far north;  
 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds,  
 I will make myself like the Most High.'  
 But you are brought down to Sheol,  
 to the depths of the Pit.

The same picture appears in Isaiah 26:14, 19; Job 26:5; Psalm 88:11; Proverbs 2:18; 9:18; 21:16, but Job 3:17-19, without the word, is a summary of the state of death:

There the wicked cease from troubling,  
 and there the weary are at rest.  
 There the prisoners are at ease together;  
 they hear not the voice of the taskmaster.  
 The small and the great are there,  
 and the slave is free from his master.

The picture appears again in Job 20:20-22:

Because his greed knew no rest,  
 he will not save anything in which he delights.  
 There was nothing left after he had eaten;  
 therefore his prosperity will not endure.  
 In the fulness of his sufficiency he will be in straits;  
 all the force of misery will come upon him.

Ecclesiastes 9:5f. brings this concept of death to a climax:

For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing,  
 and they have no more reward; but the memory of them is lost.  
 Their love and their hate and their envy have already perished, and  
 they have no more for ever any share in all that is done under the  
 sun.

Contact with the dead raises the question of spiritism. This possibility is suggested by the strong prohibition of the practice in the Old Testament. Deuteronomy 18:10f. forbids the presence in Israel of "any one who practices divination, a soothsayer, or an augur, or a sorcerer, or a charmer, or a medium, or a wizard, or a necromancer." Mediums and wizards (*ôbôth* and *yidde 'onîm*) defile the people and are to be punished by death (Lev. 19:31; 20:6, 27). People should consult God, not

the dead, on behalf of the living (Isa. 8:19). When the standard ways of seeking the will of God failed, Saul turned to ask Samuel, who was dead. "The Lord did not answer him, either by dreams, or by Urim, or by prophets," so he found a woman who was a medium ('ôb). By the use of the 'ôb Samuel was brought back from the dead as a god (*Elohim*), and one of the things Saul learned was that on the morrow he and his sons would join Samuel in the realm of the dead (I Sam. 28:1-19). On the basis of Scripture and scientific investigation contact with departed spirits may be considered a definite possibility, but it is regarded as a substitute for seeking God.<sup>5</sup>

Conversion of the dead has been vigorously discussed on the basis of I Peter 4:6. It seems impossible to interpret the passage as having reference to those who are spiritually dead. Men must "give account to him that is ready to judge the living and the dead. For unto this end was the gospel preached even to the dead, that they might be judged indeed according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit" 4:5f., ASV). The dead of verse 5 stand in definite contrast to the living, and there is no good reason to assume that the phrase has changed its meaning in the very next verse. The departed dead who did not hear the Gospel in the flesh were evangelized (*euēnggelisthē*) so that they could be judged on the same basis as men who heard the Gospel in the flesh.

There is no suggestion that they had a "second chance," but it is possible that they were given a "first chance" even after death. Despite the fact that traditional orthodoxy confines this preaching to the "righteous dead" the context would suggest that it was the dead who had no chance to hear the Gospel before they departed from life. It is difficult indeed to believe that God would leave men forever in *Hades* simply because they never had a chance to hear the Gospel. Simple justice would support the belief that "the dead" were not confined to those who died in faith.

The same conclusion may be drawn from a hymn in I Timothy 3:16 (ASV):

<sup>5</sup> Edmund F. Sutcliffe, *The Old Testament and the Future Life* (London: Burns Oates & Washbourne, 1946), pp. 25-29.

He who was manifested in the flesh,  
 Justified in the spirit,  
 Seen of angels,  
 Preached among the nations,  
 Believed on in the world,  
 Received up in glory.

Manifestation in the flesh includes the life of Christ from birth to death. Justification or vindication in the spirit has to do with the human spirit of Jesus as in I Peter 3:18, where it is said that He was "put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit." The angels that saw Him are fallen angels to be identified with the disobedient spirits in prison in I Peter 3:19f. It then is possible to see the relation between preaching to the dead in I Peter 4:6 and preaching to the nations in I Timothy 3:16. "Believed on in the world" has reference to His appearance between resurrection and ascension, and the reception in glory is the ascension and exaltation. The elaborate efforts that avoid this simple chronological<sup>6</sup> order are unnecessary when the two hymns are compared.<sup>6</sup>

*The State of the Dead.* Death is not only a future disembodiment, a severance of the human spirit from the human body, it is also a present disembodiment, a severance of the sinful soul from God. Even in bodily existence man, alienated from God, is dead. His existence is death incorporated. This mass mortality is based on the solidarity of man in sin: "by a man came death" and "in Adam all die" (I Cor. 15:21f.). Two corporations are in conflict.

Therefore as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all men sinned — sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come (Rom. 5:12-14).

Sin binds men together in a network of interdependence that makes them a "corporate personality" of mankind in estrangement from God and hostility toward God.

The old self belongs to the old age as the new self belongs to the new age, so that one is delivered from the corporation of

6 A detailed study of I Pet. 3:18-22 as a hymn of baptism has been done by Bo Reicke, *The Disobedient Spirits and Christian Baptism* (Copenhagen: Ejnar Munksgaard, 1946).

death and transformed into a new self by incorporation into the new age and the second Adam who rules in the new age. This incorporation into the new life is the significance of baptism: "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27). Incorporation into Christ is the crucifixion of the old self and the destruction of "the body of sin" (Rom. 6:6, ASV).

This "body of sin" is the mortal mass of mankind, the mystical unity of sinful humanity in hostility toward God. It is the slavery of sin, the system in which our "mortal bodies" are used as the weapons of wickedness (Rom. 6:12-14). As soldiers serve the state, so sinful men obey the passions dominant in the sinful personality, the self organized and orientated in opposition to God. The work of sinful slavery "leads to death" (6:16). The members of the mortal bodies are employed in obedience to sin so that there is "greater and greater iniquity" (6:19), and the increase of this sinful system deepens the estrangement and alienation of men from God. The wages of sin, which is death, is the consequence of remaining in the body of sin (6:23).

The body of sin is also the "body of death" (7:24). Sin is the cause, and death is the effect in this corporate estrangement from God. Paul pictures the wretchedness of the body of death by a series of illustrations. The first is from military life (7:7-12). He was alive before he learned the law, but "when the commandment came, sin revived" and he died. Before he reached the stage of life where he would be responsible to God for his own actions, he was not aware of this involvement in sin. It took the command against covetousness to arouse the latent rebellion against the will of God. Like two soldiers in mortal combat, Paul and sin battle to the fatal finish. Sin, "finding opportunity" (*aphormē*, a military metaphor), deceived and killed Paul. This death was conscious estrangement from God.

The second illustration is from the market place (7:13-20). Paul knows that he is "sold under sin" as a slave is sold in the market place. In estrangement from God he finds himself helpless to do the good. What a predicament: "I can will what is right, but I cannot do it" (7:18). Sin has become the master of his actions. Sin has come to dwell where the Spirit of God should dwell. It is death incorporated, the body of

sin and death in place of the body of Christ. A slave driver has taken the master's place.

The third illustration is from mental experience (7:21-25). In the body of death the law of God in which the inmost self finds delight is opposed by the law of sin. With the law of sin in conflict with the law of the mind, man is reduced to despair. Only the redemptive act of God can deliver man from his misery and wretchedness. Death incorporated is utter despair, man being severed from the source of his life and joy.

Emancipation from this state of estrangement is incorporation into the body of Christ, so that we "may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead in order that we may bear fruit for God" (7:4). The law of Moses is able to make us conscious of "the law of sin and death," but only "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" can emancipate from this corporate slavery (8:1-4). These are the three laws: the law of sin in which sinful man exists in estrangement from God and in mortality, the law of Sinai through which the complex of sin comes to consciousness, and the law of the Spirit operative in Christ and adequate for deliverance from death. "For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as a sin offering, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit" (8:3f., footnote). Apart from God's grace man is "dead through the trespasses and sins," and it is only by the miracle of mercy that he is made "alive together with Christ" (Eph. 2:1, 5). As a primitive song says (Eph. 5:14):

Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead,  
and Christ shall give you light.

#### DEATH AS DEPARTURE (*Analysis*)

The belief that death is a departure to a more blessed state remained blurred until the resurrection of Christ brought light into that dark valley. The family tomb was a symbol of some type of tribal solidarity that gave significance to the state of burial. A good life was to live long and to go to one's fathers in peace (Gen. 15:15). "Abraham breathed his last and died in a good age, an old man and full of years, and was gathered to his people" (25:8; cf. 25:17; 35:29; 37:35; 47:30; 49:29, 33;

50:25; Num. 20:24, 26; 27:13; Deut. 32:50; Judg. 2:10). At times this could mean no more than that he was "buried in the tomb of his father" (II Sam. 17:23), but often there seems to be more to the idea. Spiritism was a popular practice, but this was forbidden in the prophetic and priestly traditions of the Old Testament (Deut. 18:10-12; I Sam. 28:8-14; Lev. 19:31; 20:6, 27; Isa. 8:19). Some evidence may be found for ancestor worship, but this throws little light on the problem of death.<sup>7</sup>

Departure from this life is pictured as *analysis*, a Greek word that describes the loosing of a vessel from its moorings or a soldier striking his tent. Life for Paul meant Christ, and it made little difference to him whether he was present or absent from the body. He would prefer, if it were not for the good he could do in the flesh, to depart and be with Christ. "I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better" (Phil. 1:23). This departure is described in more detail in II Timothy 4:6-8:

For I am already on the point of being sacrificed; the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

Eternal hope longs for the swallowing of death in victory. Isaiah 25:8 holds forth the hope: "He will swallow up death for ever." Hosea 13:14 taunts death with the words: "O Death, where are your plagues? Sheol, where is your destruction?" God's action in the resurrection of Christ gathers all these glimpses of glory into a coherent constellation of hope that the final victory will be the defeat of death. Paul found in these prophecies the vocabulary of victory (I Cor. 15:54).

*Immortality.* Man's immortality is God's gift. Like all that pertains to salvation, it is of grace. At the *parousia* it comes to pass: "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable nature must put on the imperishable, and this mortal nature must put on immortality" (I Cor. 15:51-53). Man is no im-

<sup>7</sup> A. C. Knudson, *The Religious Teaching of the Old Testament* (New York: Abingdon, 1918), pp. 386f.

mortal spirit in a mortal body, so that death is the putting off of the mortal body. Man is mortal, and he must "put on" immortality which he does not now possess. His immortal body is the spiritual body at the resurrection of the dead.

Man's spirit is clothed with immortality at the moment it leaves the body. Paul would not desire to depart if he believed he would be found naked after leaving his body.

For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Here indeed we groan, and long to put on our heavenly dwelling, so that by putting it on we may not be found naked. For while we are still in this tent, we sigh with anxiety; not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life (II Cor. 5:1-4).

God has given the Spirit as a guarantee that when we leave the tent we have a building, that immortality is put on when mortality is swallowed by life. Fellowship with Christ is such that not even death can sever us from "the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:39).

The classical and the Christian views of immortality have become so confused and commingled that it has become necessary to disentangle them. The classical view, which is most fully stated in the philosophy of Plato, is based on a view of the nature of man. Briefly it may be reduced to five arguments. The first is the argument from *Antapodosis* (giving back in return). All things exist as opposites: hot and cold, great and small, good and bad, life and death, waking and sleeping. Therefore, life comes from death as death comes from life. All things run in cycles, so there must be a rebirth of life out of death, according to the law of exchange, or we will end in a dead universe (*Phaedo*, 70c-82e).

The second argument is from *anamnēsis* (recollection), which insists that the soul recalls ideas from a pre-existent state and therefore must also exist as it leaves the body (*Phaedo*, 72e-77d). The third argument is based on the belief that the *ousia* (essence) of the soul is simple, not subject to change, while the mortal body is complex and can change. The "simple soul," which is unable to change, is unable to die (*Phaedo*, 80b). The fourth argument is based on the idea of participation. The soul participates in life and has a life-giving power which does not admit of death (*Phaedo*, 103b-107b). A fifth

and final argument may be called an argument from motion. Assuming that all "that which is ever in motion is immortal," the self-moving soul must therefore be immortal and unbegotten (*Phaedrus*, 245c-246a; *Laws*, 893-896).

It is clear that Plato based belief in immortality on the nature of the soul. It is just as clear that the Bible bases immortality on the nature of God. Behind all the discussion of how man "puts on" immortality given from God is the presupposition that God alone is by nature immortal. Man must eat from the tree of life if he is to escape from the powers of death (Rev. 2:7; 22:2, 14). The reality of immortality and the reality of God are inseparable. Immortality inheres in God. He is "the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God" (I Tim. 1:17). The flaming sword separates sinful man from the realm of Him "who alone has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has ever seen or can see" (I Tim. 6:16).

This hidden realm of immortality is revealed in this realm of polarity and death from the supra-polar sphere by the "appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (II Tim. 1:10). Before the appearance (*epiphaneia*) of our Lord men feared death and all the dark and dismal powers associated with death, but Jesus came to "destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong bondage" (Heb. 2:14f.).

*Intermediate State.* Death is often described as sleep. When Israel requests that he not be buried in Egypt because he wanted to sleep with his fathers, it may mean little more than burial in the family sepulcher (Gen. 47:30). The same is true of David when he "slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David" (I Kings 2:10), for this appears as the conventional phrase for natural death about twenty times in the books of Kings. In the New Testament, David's death is so described (Acts 13:36). Premature death is also described as sleep (Jer. 51:39, 57; Isa. 43:17; Ps. 13:3). Of death it may be said: "For then I should have lain down and been quiet; I should have slept; then I should have been at rest" (Job 3:13). Daniel 12:2 prepares the way for a deeper significance for death: "And many of those who sleep in the

dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." In primitive thought Samuel could only be "disturbed" when he was brought up from *Sheol* (I Sam. 28:15).

When Jesus died on the cross, "the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom; and the earth shook, and the rocks were split; the tombs also were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised, and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many" (Matt. 27:51ff.). The critical problems associated with this unusual passage do not remove its importance for the understanding of death as sleep.

Jesus described the death of Lazarus as sleep, but the inability of the people to think beyond "taking rest in sleep" caused Him to say plainly that Lazarus was dead (John 11:11-14). The distinction between sleep as rest and sleep as death is suggestive, but the focus of attention is "the resurrection at the last day" in contrast with "the resurrection and the life" which removes the threat of death altogether (11:24ff.). Stephen prayed that the Lord Jesus would receive his spirit, requested forgiveness for his enemies, and "fell asleep" (Acts 7:60).

It remains for Paul to develop the significance of death as sleep in relation to Christ. His words of comfort to the Thessalonians center in this concept of death for the redeemed.

But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. For this we declare unto you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep (I Thess. 4:13-15).

They are now with the Lord, and they will return *with* Him at the *parousia*. A woman is free to marry another man when her husband falls asleep in death, and God visits the sacrilegious in chastisement not only with weakness and illness but even with the sleep of death (I Cor. 7:39; 11:30). Repeatedly those who are awaiting the resurrection at the *parousia* are described as those who have "fallen asleep" (15:6, 18, 20, 51). Those alive at the *parousia* do not undergo the sleep of death, so they are not raised but "changed" at the resurrection of the dead (15:51; cf. I Thess. 4:17). II Peter 3:4 speaks of the

mockers as those who say: "For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things have continued as they were from the beginning of creation."

The ambiguity of the Scriptural statements gave rise to two major movements of thought. The theory of "secret store-houses" for the souls of the departed is briefly summarized in Augustine's *Enchiridion*, 109:

But during the time which intervenes between a man's death and the resurrection at the last, men's souls are reserved in secret store-houses, at rest or in tribulation according to each soul's deserts, according to its lot in the flesh during life.<sup>8</sup>

Thomas Aquinas, building on the speculations of Gregory the Great, develops Augustine's secret abodes in answer to the question "Whether souls are conveyed to heaven or hell immediately after death?" He comments:

Among the secret abodes of which Augustine speaks, we must also reckon hell and heaven, where some souls are detained before the resurrection. The reason why a distinction is drawn between the time before and the time after the resurrection is because before the resurrection they are there without the body whereas afterwards they are with the body, and because in certain places there are souls now which will not be there after the resurrection (*Summa Theologica*, I-II, Suppl. 3, Q. 69, art. 2).<sup>9</sup>

His conclusion leaves for the last day only the reunion of soul and body of those who have been purified or punished, and this is the official dogma of the Catholic Church today. The soul has reached its glory, and only the glory of the body remains.

In many ways Calvin's *Psychopannychia* (1534), his first theological writing, remains standard for the storehouse theory purged of purgatorial connections, although some of the ideas are later developed in his commentaries and the *Institutes*. The title means "the watchfulness of the soul" as it awaits the resurrection. In his polemic against the Anabaptists, who

8 Tr. Ernest Evans, *Saint Augustine's Enchiridion* (London: S.P.C.K., 1953), p. 95. Backgrounds to belief in the intermediate state may be seen in T. Francis Glasson, *Greek Influence in Jewish Eschatology* (London: S.P.C.K., 1961), pp. 1-47; F. van der Meer and Christine Mohrmann, *Atlas of the Early Christian World*, tr. Mary F. Hedland and H. H. Rowley (London: Nelson, 1958), pp. 53-55, 166-168; Alfred Stuiber, *Refrigerium Interim* (Bonn: Hanstein, 1957).

9 Tr. Fathers of the English Dominican Province. (New York: Benzinger, 1948), III, 2831.

taught the passive idea of soul sleeping, he strongly stressed the activity and alertness of the soul. This he does not so much in terms of the individual as in terms of the corporate life the Christian has in Christ. Christ is the clothing of the Christian in the intermediate state.<sup>10</sup>

His final formulation of the intermediate state is far more cautious and reserved than the assured answers of Aquinas, but he does not abandon the idea of active waiting. In the *Institutes* (III. xxv. 6) he says:

Still, since Scripture uniformly enjoins us to look with expectation to the advent of Christ, and delays the crown of glory till that period, let us be contented with the limits divinely prescribed to us — viz. that the souls of the righteous, after their warfare is ended, obtain blessed rest where in joy they wait for the fruition of promised glory, and thus the final result is suspended till Christ the Redeemer appear.<sup>11</sup>

In opposition to the active theory of the secret storehouse the passive theory of soul sleeping arose. Luther left evidence that he had much in common with the views advocated by the Anabaptists. Like them he was disposed toward the Biblical expression of sleep and thought of death as a deep and dreamless slumber that is without perception and consciousness. He can speak of the soul longing for the body and the experience of hearing God and the angels, but the awareness of this world requires an awakening out of sleep as in the case of Moses and Elijah at the transfiguration or the rich man who lifted up his eyes in hell. Luther is far less Platonic than Calvin, although he also thinks of death as the separation of the soul from the body. In a sermon on September 28, 1533, he reflected his general belief in the words: "We shall sleep until He comes and knocks on the little grave and says: 'Doctor Martin, get up!' Then in a moment I will arise and will be happy with Him eternally."<sup>12</sup>

Along with the language problem, there is the problem of the alleged development in Paul's eschatology. C. H. Dodd has argued that a "turning-point seems to lie somewhere about the

10 *Corpus Reformatorum* (hereafter C.R.), 33, 165-239. English translation in *Calvin's Tracts and Treatises*, tr. Henry Beveridge, ed. Thomas F. Torrance (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1958), III, 413-490.

11 Tr. Henry Beveridge (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957), 11, 267.

12 W. A., pp. 37, 151.

time of II Corinthians.”<sup>13</sup> Is it possible that Paul, between I Corinthians and II Corinthians, turned away from the resurrection at the *parousia* to an acceptance of the immortality of the soul? There is a development in Paul’s eschatology, even a shift of emphasis, but the belief in an intermediate state appears side by side with that of resurrection throughout Paul’s thought. “God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep” so that “the dead in Christ will rise first” (I Thess. 4:14, 16). At death they departed to be with the Lord, and at the *parousia* they return with the Lord at His return in order that the resurrection of their bodies may take place. Their presence with the Lord between death and the resurrection does not exclude the resurrection.

The emphasis on “away from the body and at home with the Lord” in II Corinthians 5:8 does not exclude “knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus” in II Corinthians 4:14. The God of comfort is still the “God who raises the dead” (1:9). Paul can desire “to depart and be with Christ” in Philippians 1:23 and “await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body” in Philippians 3:20f. It cannot be said that he abandons belief in the resurrection for belief in the immortality of the soul or spirit after death.<sup>14</sup>

A recent rejection of the intermediate state claims that man receives his spiritual or risen body immediately after death so that there is no biblical basis for belief in a disembodied spirit.<sup>15</sup> Two types of questions may be addressed to the author. The first is exegetical. Is it not rather inconsistent to appeal to the tongue of the rich man in Hades (Luke 16:24), interpreted in a literal way, and stop short of a literal interpretation of the rest of the story, e.g., “bosom,” “eyes,” “finger,” “water,” “flame,” “chasm”? St. Thomas Aquinas, in an ingenious way, took the whole parable as literal truth, but it is doubtful that the author of this recent interpretation wishes to be so understood.<sup>16</sup> Fur-

13 *The Maid of Paul: Change and Development* (Manchester: University Press, 1934), p. 31. Cf. “The Meaning of the Resurrection to Paul,” *Modern Churchman*, XVII (Dec. 1927, Jan. 1928), 581-587.

14 Ronald Berry, “Death and Life in Christ,” *Scottish Journal of Theology*, XIV (Mar. 1961), 60-76.

15 Frank Stagg, *New Testament Theology* (Nashville: Broadman, 1962), pp. 319-331.

16 *Ibid.*, p. 322.

thermore, does not the interpretation of "absent from the body" and "at home with the Lord" (II Cor. 5:8) as "only the loss of the present visible body" make a discontinuity between the physical body and the spiritual body so that we have two bodies, with no real relation, rather than the spiritual body as the physical body transformed and transmuted?<sup>17</sup> No evidence is produced to prove that the "house not made with hands" (II Cor. 5:1) is identical with the "spiritual body" (I Cor. 15:44).<sup>18</sup>

It is simply not true that the New Testament knows nothing of a disembodied human spirit. If the spirit of Jesus was not absent from His body between His death on the cross and His resurrection on the third day later, no real bodily resurrection of Jesus took place. He passed immediately from the physical body which was nailed to the cross to a spiritual body, "a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," if this rejection of the intermediate state of our Lord between death and resurrection is accepted. The New Testament teaches a very different thing, however. It is no wonder that Stagg passes over I Peter 3:19 as an "obscure reference,"<sup>19</sup> for it plainly says that Jesus was "put to death in the flesh and made alive in the spirit" and that it was "in the spirit" that Jesus "preached to the spirits in prison." The dead to whom He also preached were given the opportunity to "live in the spirit like God" (I Pet. 4:6). It is very true that the resurrection body of Jesus was real, after his resurrection, but what is the meaning of His words on the cross: "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit!" (Luke 23:46)? Did He receive His spiritual or risen body immediately after this? If not, why is it said there is no biblical basis for belief in a disembodied spirit? If so, what does His bodily resurrection on the third day mean? The theory would make two bodies, one that was raised immediately after death and another that was raised on the third day. Even though the word "body" is used, it is difficult to see little more in this theory than the Platonic doctrine of the survival of the eternal soul after deliverance from the bodily tomb.

17 *Ibid.*, p. 324.

18 This hetero-somatism of much modern exegesis, that dismisses the idea of a genuine continuity between the present physical body and the future spiritual body, has been subjected to careful criticism by M. E. Dahl, *The Resurrection of the Body* (London: SCM, 1962).

19 Stagg, *op. cit.*, p. 336.

The New Testament knows also of "the spirits of just men made perfect" (Heb. 12:23), now gathered on "Mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem," as well as of angelic spirits that never were and never will be embodied (12:22; 1:14).

Some eschatological questions may be added to these exegetical ones. If there is "no interval at all to God or to those who through death have entered into eternity with him" and "the resurrection which is future to those within time may be present reality to those who have died and who are now with the Lord in a bodily state,"<sup>20</sup> how does one avoid Luther's theory of "soul sleeping"? Indeed, how does one avoid a doctrine of a sleeping God? It is one thing to say that God is so patient that "one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (II Pet. 3:8), but it is a very different thing to say that there is no past or future to the Lord of history, the Creator and Judge of men. If there is no past or future to those in the intermediate state, the cry of the martyrs under the altar would hardly be possible: "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before thou wilt judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell upon the earth?" (Rev. 6:10). If time is real to the martyrs and to God, it is possible for the biblical statement to be made: "Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been" (6:11).

Paradise and other pictures associated with the sleep of death provide the Biblical basis for belief in an intermediate state of blessedness.<sup>21</sup> The word "Paradise," borrowed from the Persian language, means "park" and is so used in the LXX (Neh. 2:8; Eccl. 2:5). Numerous passages in apocryphal literature describe the past, present, and future abode of the righteous with this term (II Esdras 3:6; 4:7f.; 7:36, 95, 123; 8:52-54; I Enoch 20:7; 25:3-5; 28:1; Testament of Levi 18:10; II Baruch 4:3; 51:11; II Enoch 8; 65:8-10). All three states appear in the Scriptures. Man's original abode, in right relation and obedient fellowship with God, was in the Paradise of God (Gen. 2:8, 10, 16; 3:23f.; 13:10; Ezek. 28:13; 31:8f.; 36:35; Isa. 51:3). The ultimate abode of the righteous, the

20 *Ibid.*, p. 326.

21 TWNT, V, 763-771. The symbolic significance of Paradise in higher education has been traced by George H. Williams, *Wilderness and Paradise in Christian Thought* (New York: Harper, 1962), pp. 141-231.

end being as the beginning, will be Paradise (Rev. 2:7; 21:6; 22:1f., 19).

It is therefore an appropriate picture of the intermediate abode of the blessed between death and resurrection. When the thief on the cross asked Jesus to remember him when He comes again in kingly power he received a promise beyond his request: "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43). Apparently Jesus departed to be in Paradise when He said: "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit" (23:46). Some imagine a contradiction between this departure to Paradise and the other New Testament tradition that affirms a descent into *Hades* (I Pet. 3:19f.; 4:6), but there is no good reason why both traditions cannot be true. The further implication that Paradise is an abode with Christ is confirmed by Paul's description of the state as "the third heaven" (II Cor. 12:2f.). Despite later tradition, apocryphal literature does not locate Paradise in *Hades*. Departed spirits in *Hades* could be transferred from *Hades* to Paradise between the death and resurrection of Christ, but Paradise is always associated with the abode of God.

In harmony with this interpretation of Paradise is the picture of poor Lazarus who "died and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom" (Luke 16:22). The rich man in *Hades*, being in torment, "lifted up his eyes, and saw Abraham far off and Lazarus in his bosom" and was told by Abraham that "a great chasm" had been fixed in order that those who would pass from one state to the other would not be able to do so (16:23, 26). Another stewardship parable in the same chapter speaks of a dishonest steward who used his master's money in order to make friends who would take him into their houses when he was thrust out of his stewardship. The dishonest steward is commended for his prudence, and this son of this age proved himself wiser than "the sons of the light" who do not make friends with their money. The paradigm is pointed: "And I tell you, make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous mammon, so that when it fails they may receive you into the eternal habitations" (16:9). These "eternal habitations" are the "houses" of the blessed who benefited on earth from the generosity of those who make friends with "unrighteous mammon."

The abode of the disciples with the great Teacher begins in

this world (John 1:38), and it is a relation of master and servant. Jesus promised: "If any one serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there shall my servant be also; if any one serves me, the Father will honor him" (12:26). The departure of Jesus would not sever this relation forever. He comforted the sorrowing disciples with the words: "In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also" (14:2f.). The abiding places in the Father's house are the rest stations on the path to perfection, and the coming of which He speaks is not the manifestation to the world (14: 18-24). His coming to abide with His disciples will not be severed by departure from the world. Jesus prays: "Father, I desire that they also, whom thou hast given me, may be with me where I am, to behold my glory which thou hast given me in thy love for me before the foundation of the world" (17:24).

The white robes or garments of Revelation are not reserved until the resurrection (6:11; 7:9, 13f.; 22:14; cf. 3:4f.; 4:4; 16:15). Daniel 12:10 speaks of those who "shall purify themselves, and make themselves white," and apocryphal literature speaks of these white robes or garments as the clothing of the righteous after the death of the body (II Esdras 2:45-47; I Enoch 62:15f.; II Baruch 51:5). It is a mistake to call these garments of glory, since they are the garb of angels (I Enoch 71:1). In the terms of Paul it is the clothing of the righteous between the present "inner man" (II Cor. 4:16) and the future "spiritual body" (I Cor. 15:44). The intermediate state of waiting is plain in Revelation 6:11 where each martyr is "given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been."

This picture of Paradise raises the question whether the process of perfection extends beyond the death of the body. The Westminster Confession of Faith (1647) asserts:

The souls of the righteous, being made perfect in holiness, are received into the highest heavens, where they behold the face of God in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies: and the souls of the wicked are cast into hell, where they remain in torments and utter darkness, reserved to the judgment of the great day (XXXII).

In other words, the righteous go "straight to heaven" and the wicked go "straight to hell." Only the redemption of the body remains. It is doubtful whether this can be sustained by sound exegesis. For Paul the process of perfection reached from regeneration to the resurrection of the dead. He was sure that he who began a good work in the Philippians would "bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ" (1:6). He believed that he would attain perfection at the resurrection of the dead. At death he would depart to be with Christ (1:23), but perfection would be attained only at the resurrection (3:11f.).

The "spirits of just men" are made perfect in the intermediate state (Heb. 12:23), but complete perfection of each is impossible until the perfection of all: "apart from us they should not be made perfect" (11:40). A distinction between the perfection of the spirit in contrast to the perfection of the body corresponds to the two stages of immortality, one at death and the other at the resurrection.

The dreadful fear of a state of purgatory blinds many to the process of perfection in Paradise, but the doctrine of purgatory separates the state from Paradise. The fatal flaw of the doctrine of purgatory is the separation of the state of the future from the deeds of this life. The transfer of merit to those who had no merit was rejected by Augustine, even when he allowed for prayers and almsgivings on behalf of the dead. Prayers and almsgiving, according to Augustine, are of advantage to those who during their life have deserved that such acts should be of advantage to them. It is here and now that a man acquires any merit or demerit through which after this life he becomes capable of relief or depression. On behalf of the very good, such acts are thanksgivings, on behalf of the not very good they are propitiations, while on behalf of the very bad, though they are no sort of assistance to the dead, they are some sort of consolation to the living (*Enchiridion*, 110).<sup>22</sup> It is easy to see here the foundation of Dante's three realms (*inferno*, *purgatorio*, *paradiso*), but it is also a rejection of transferred merit.

Calvin saw eternal blessedness as a process of perfection which included the believer, the church, and the world.<sup>23</sup> The point needs to be pressed to the logical conclusion that no part

22 Tr. Evans, pp. 95ff.

23 Heinrich Quistorp, *Calvin's Doctrine of the Last Things*, tr. Harold Knight (London: Lutterworth, 1955), pp. 171-186.

of the process of perfection reaches the goal until the perfection of the whole. The first redeemed saint does not reach ultimate perfection until the last one has arrived: "apart from us they should not be made perfect" (Heb. 11:40). The body of each is redeemed when the Church, the body of Christ, is redeemed, and this corporate solidarity of the redeemed does not arrive at the goal apart from the cosmic redemption. The Christian, the Church, and the creation arrive at the ultimate point of perfection together.

## *Chapter Four*

# Resurrection

BELIEF IN THE RESURRECTION of the dead directs attention to the clothing of the body with immortality. Even though bodily resurrection is related to some of the fundamental presuppositions of biblical faith, there have been many attempts to deny or dilute it. In New Testament times the teaching met resistance from two directions. The Sadducees, who limited their doctrines to the written Law, said "that there is no resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit" (Acts 23:8; cf. Mark 12:18; Luke 20:27). Josephus, a Jewish historian who joined the Pharisees, describes the teachings of the Sadducees in terms of the future life and immortality. He says they taught "that souls die with the bodies" (*Ant. XVIII. 1. 4*) and "take away the belief of the immortal duration of the soul, and punishments and rewards in Hades" (*Wars II.8.14*).<sup>1</sup> According to information available, they based their denials on the legalistic ground that the doctrines, as advocated by the Pharisees, were not found in the written Law.

Philosophical denial of the resurrection came from the Greeks. Among the Greeks a clear distinction was made between the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the dead, the former being accepted by all save the Epicureans and the latter rejected by all. According to Aeschylus (*Eumenides*, 647f.), on the occasion when the goddess Athene founded the court of the Areopagus, the god Apollo spoke these words:

But when the thirsty dust sucks up man's blood  
Once shed in death, he shall arise no more.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *The Life and Works of Flavius Josephus*, tr. William Whiston (Philadelphia: Winston, n.d.), pp. 531, 676.

<sup>2</sup> *The Complete Greek Drama*, ed. Whitney J. Oates and Eugene O'Neill, Jr. (New York: Random House, 1938), I, 294.

This was the mood met by Paul when he preached that God "has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all men by raising him from the dead" (Acts 17:31). The mockery that rejected the preaching of Paul crept into the congregation of Corinth, because some asserted: "there is no resurrection of the dead" (I Cor. 15:12). Behind most of the Greek mockery was a philosophical dualism between body and soul which made it impossible for them to see the meaning of the resurrection. Plato had said that "we are imprisoned in the body, like an oyster in his shell" (*Phaedrus*, 250c), and the body (*sōma*) is our tomb (*sēma*) (*Gorgias*, 493a).<sup>3</sup>

Most modern objections to the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead are based on similar legalistic and philosophical presuppositions, and it is always important to look for these assumptions if any clarity is to result from comparative study. The Christian view of the resurrection has presuppositions that need not be hidden. The grounds must be accepted if the goal is to be reached. The discussion may be logically divided into "the resurrection of life" and "the resurrection of judgment" (John 5:29).

#### THE RESURRECTION OF LIFE

*The Ground of the Belief.* The resurrection of life is the Christian answer to the threat of death. The ground for the belief is found in God, yet not God in philosophical abstraction, unrelated to man and the world, but in historical action by which He relates himself to both. In the background of belief are at least three basic views. The first is the view that man has a corporate existence. The dualism of Plato is foreign to biblical faith, and the idea that death leaves the soul unperturbed as the oyster leaves the shell or as the body leaves the tomb has no place in biblical teaching. Man in his concrete and historical existence is a living soul, made from the breath of God and the dust of the earth (Gen. 2:7).

If there is to be full life beyond death the whole man will need to be redeemed. In the Old Testament, life in Sheol is only a shadow of historical existence, and only the shades

<sup>3</sup> *The Dialogues of Plato*, tr. B. Jowett (New York: Random House, 1937), I, 254, 552.

(*rephaim*), not the disembodied souls, go down to Sheol.<sup>4</sup> The Hebrew word for the dead (*rephaim*) denotes weakness, and their existence in Sheol is considered only a weakened form of the present life (Isa. 14:9f.). They can only chirp and mutter (8:19). Paul Althaus has vigorously defended the anthropological grounds for the doctrine of the resurrection, holding that in human existence corporeality and reality belong essentially together.<sup>5</sup>

A second view related to the resurrection of the dead is the goodness of creation. Man's body being a part of God's good creation is not essentially evil. It is no prison in which he is confined as a prisoner (Plato, *Phaedo*, 62) and from which he may escape at death, but part of his essential existence and subject to God's redemptive activity. Even though the body is "dead because of sin," the Christian man groans "inwardly as we wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies" (Rom. 8:10,23).

Anders Nygren has pointed out that the goodness of creation, the incarnation of the Son of God in human flesh, and the resurrection of the dead are inseparably connected as the three fundamental dogmas of the early Church in her life-and-death struggle against the inroads of Gnostic dualism.<sup>6</sup> If corporeality belongs to God's creation, it may be included in His gracious act of redemption.

The third perspective in the background of the resurrection is the personal reality of God. At many places in the Old Testament, fellowship with God suggests an ultimate triumph over death. "Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him" (Gen. 5:24; cf. Heb. 11:5). "God will ransom my soul from the power of Sheol, for he will receive me" (Ps. 49:15). "Thou dost guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards thou wilt receive me to glory" (Ps. 73:24). Elijah was "taken" (II Kings 2:3,5,10) and "went up by a whirlwind into heaven" (2:11). Job believed that he had a living Redeemer and that after his skin was destroyed, without his flesh, he would see God (Job 19:25f.). The Psalmist had hope that he would awake and be satisfied with beholding the form of God

4 H. Wheeler Robinson, *Inspiration and Revelation in the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1946), pp. 94-100.

5 *Die letzten Dinge* (Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1949), pp. 121f.

6 *Agape and Eros*, tr. Philip S. Watson (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1953), pp. 276-288.

(Ps. 17:15). In the New Testament, appeal is made to Psalm 16:10 for the resurrection of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:27; 13:35).

Not too much New Testament teaching should be read into these statements, but it should not be overlooked that Jesus, in opposition to the Sadducees, appealed even to the written Law (Mark 12:18-27; Matt. 22:23-33; Luke 20:27-40). The Sadducees knew neither the Scriptures nor the power of God.<sup>7</sup> Had they known the power of God they would have known that those who rise from the dead "neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels" (Mark 12:25); and, had they known what the Scriptures said about God's personal relation to the patriarchs, they would have concluded: "He is not God of the dead, but of the living" (12:27).

The contrast between the dread and despair that gripped men's souls in the presence of Sheol, and the jubilant hope aroused by the prospects of resurrection, is vividly portrayed in the apocalypse of Isaiah (24-27). Isaiah 26:14 says of the wicked:

They are dead, they will not live;  
they are shades, they will not arise;  
to that end thou has visited them with destruction  
and wiped out all remembrance of them.

In the same chapter appears the first clear reference to the resurrection of life. Of the righteous it is said (v. 19):

Thy dead shall live, their bodies shall rise.  
O dwellers in the dust, awake and sing for joy!  
For thy dew is a dew of light,  
and on the land of the shades  
thou wilt let it fall.

The resurrection of the dead rests on the power and reality of God and man's right relation to God.

Against this background two major factors stand in the foreground of resurrection faith.<sup>8</sup> The first is "the first-born from the dead" (Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5). In Israel all the inheritance and the authority of the father belonged to the first-born. Israel, destined to rule over the nations of the earth, was

<sup>7</sup> William Strawson, *Jesus and the Future Life* (London: Epworth, 1959), pp. 205f. This theme in the Old Testament has been traced by Robert Martin-Achard, *From Death to Life*, tr. John Penney Smith (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1960).

<sup>8</sup> Oscar Cullmann, *Immortality of the Soul or Resurrection of the Dead?* (New York: Macmillan, 1958), pp. 40-57.

called the first-born of God (Exod. 4:22; Jer. 31:9). As one of the royal psalms says: "And I will make him the first-born, the highest of the kings of the earth" (Ps. 89:27). The term therefore has reference more to destiny than to origin, to pre-eminence than to priority in time. When Christ is called "the first-born of all creation" (Col. 1:15) and "the first-born from the dead" (1:18), it is His sovereignty over creation and death that is proclaimed. Paul's famous word play makes this plain: "the first-born (*prototokos*) from the dead, that in everything he might be pre-eminent (*protoeuōn*)" (Col. 1:18). The same verse calls Christ also "head" and "beginning."

In opposition to the idea that Christ was a creature, the early church fathers rightly insisted that Christ was *prototokos* (first-born), not *protoktistos* (first-created).<sup>9</sup> Those "predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the first-born among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29) are those who are to share with Christ in His resurrection. He is the "pioneer of their salvation" as He brings "many sons to glory" (Heb. 2:10).

The historical event by which the Lord Jesus was raised from the dead is the prospective power by which we may believe in our own resurrection. God will bring those back who have fallen asleep in Jesus, "since we believe that Jesus died and rose again" (I Thess. 4:14). His resurrection of the dead has become the ground of hope that, at the *parousia*, the dead will be raised and the living will be raptured.

This is the reason Paul introduces his lengthy discussion of the resurrection of the dead with a vigorous defense of the resurrection of Christ (I Cor. 15:1-11). His resurrection is preliminary to any clear prospects for our resurrection, and the validity of the gospel is threatened by a denial of the resurrection of Christ.

Now, if Christ is preached as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified of God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised. If Christ has not been

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Francis W. Beare, *The Interpreter's Bible*, ed. George Arthur Buttric (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1955), (hereafter I. B.), 11, 164.

raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life we who are in Christ have only hope, we are of all men most to be pitied (15:12-19).

Those who are in Christ by faith are not merely hoping; the hope is grounded in the historical event of Christ's resurrection. All stands or falls on this event.

Our resurrection is organically related to His resurrection, so that His conquest of death is the first-fruits of the full harvest at the consummation (15:20-23). If the Lord Jesus is still dead there is no prospect for those who are in Him but the grim reality of death, for His destiny is our destiny. All things, therefore, are worthless compared to the knowledge of Him in "the power of his resurrection" (Phil. 3:10). Sharing His sufferings and conformity to His death are courageously accepted that we "may attain the resurrection from the dead" (3:11). His actual power is the potentiality for our perfection, the completion of our lives at the resurrection. The whole perspective of the future and possibility of victory over death focuses on Him who has already won the battle at the crucial point.

This prospective power is also proleptic, even in the days when Christ was present in the flesh.<sup>10</sup> The power by which the human body could be transformed was evident in His transfiguration (Mark 9:2) as well as in His resurrection (Matt. 27:52f.), but the power manifest in Him was transmitted to others. Death retreated before Him in the raising of the dead (Luke 7:11-17; 8:40-56; John 11), and by the power of the Spirit demonic powers were cast out and destroyed (Matt. 11:5; 12:28; Luke 11:20). The power which was at work in Christ, in the days of His flesh, became operative in the Church after His resurrection. Unworthy participation in His spiritual body exposed man to the powers of sickness and death (I Cor. 5:5; 11:29f.), even as worthy participation brought health and final resurrection from the dead (John 6:40; 44,54).

It is this participation in His proleptic power that opens the way for a deeper understanding of baptism and the Lord's Supper. We share not only in His death to sin but also in the power of the resurrection by which sin and death are defeated. The power of His resurrection is both prospective, looking

<sup>10</sup> Oscar Cullmann, *The Early Church*, tr. A. J. B. Higgins (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1956), pp. 165-173.

forward to our resurrection, but also proleptic, at work beforehand in the person of Christ and the fellowship of His Church.

The second factor in the foreground of resurrection faith is "the first fruits of the Spirit" (Rom. 8:23). In many ways this is inseparable from "the first-born from the dead," for Jesus was "designated Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by His resurrection from the dead" (1:4). The idea of "the first fruits," like the idea of the first-born, is taken from the Old Testament (Exod. 23:14-17; 34:22-24; Lev. 23:1-44; Deut. 26:1-11; II Chron. 31:5). As the first-born of man and beasts were claimed by the Lord (Exod. 13:2), so the first fruits of the harvest were presented to Him also (Exod. 22:29). In a figurative sense it means the token of the coming harvest. As the first fruits were a guarantee of the full harvest in the future, so the present possession of the Spirit is a foretaste of full redemption at the resurrection of the body.

It has already been noted (Chapter 2) that the first four of the spiritual experiences in Romans 8:1-27 are vitally related to the life available in Christ. The last two concepts focus on the resurrection, an essential factor to the fullness of eternal life. The graphic statement on the threefold groan compares the bodily sufferings of the present with the glorious redemption of the future.<sup>11</sup> God's creation groans as it longs for deliverance from the bondage of futility in the freedom of the future (8:22). God's children, who have already received the first fruits of the Spirit, groan for the complete sonship in the redemption of the body (8:23).

Sonship is freedom, and sonship is incomplete until freedom is complete. Sonship is a process of perfection until the image of God has been finished in man. God's Spirit groans as He helps our weakness and "intercedes for the saints according to the will of God" (8:26f.). The first fruits of the Spirit along with the first-born from the dead furnish the foreground for belief in the resurrection.

The first fruits (*aparchē*) of the Spirit are about the same as the guarantee (*arrabōn*) of the Spirit which God gives to assure us that God will ultimately redeem His possessions from the powers of sin and death (II Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:14). The Spirit is also God's seal (*sphragis*) by which God has sealed

11 Anders Nygren, *Commentary on Romans*, tr. Carl C. Rasmussen, (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg, 1949), pp. 329-336.

the believer with the Holy Spirit of promise unto the day of full redemption (Eph. 1:13; 4:30). The present transformation of life in the power of the Spirit constitutes a bridgehead of belief by which the powers of death are defeated and man is delivered from the threat of destruction.

These two factors that constitute the ground for belief in the resurrection are closely related. Both Christ and the Spirit are described as first fruits (I Cor. 15:23; Rom. 8:23). Christ, as the last Adam, "became a life-giving spirit" (I Cor. 15:45). Indeed, "the Lord is the Spirit," and "we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit" (II Cor. 3:17f.). The complete transformation, when we shall "bear the image of the man of heaven," will be the resurrection of the dead (I Cor. 15:49).

*The Goal of the Belief.* The goal of the redemptive process is the resurrection of the body. The belief that the body, as essential to man's true selfhood, is to be redeemed has both ethical and eschatological significance. This is one of the major differences between the Greek and the Hebrew views of man. The gulf between Paul and Gnostic dualism is vividly illustrated in the conflict over immorality in the Church of Corinth (I Cor. 6:12-20). The Gnostics were able to justify the most sordid type of sexual behavior with the slogan "all things are lawful for me" (6:12). They assumed that the acts of the body had no effect on the human spirit, so that one could be joined to a prostitute with his body while being joined to the Lord with his spirit.

Paul, looking on man as a psychosomatic entity, was horrified. Those who are united to the Lord not only become one in spirit with Him, but their very "bodies are members of Christ" (6:15). Man is to glorify God in both body and spirit, not only because they are a unity but also because both are to be redeemed. Appealing to Jewish dietary regulations, the dualism argued: "Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food." Paul replies that the food and the stomach have no place in the redeemed body, for both will be destroyed by God.

Paul Althaus rightly points out that the stomach (*koilia*) represents the totality of man's sensual functions which make earthly existence possible and pass away with the world, while body (*sōma*) is "carrier and object of our action, expression,

form"; united with the risen Christ, it will be "raised with the personality."<sup>12</sup>

In discussing the Christian attitude towards dietary regulations and Sabbath keeping, Paul pours forth the ethical importance of our union with the Lord, in a passage of surpassing poetic beauty. Moffatt's translation preserves much that is in the original Greek (Rom. 14:6-8):

The eater eats to the Lord,  
since he thanks God for his food;  
the non-eater abstains to the Lord,  
and he too thanks God.  
For none of us lives to himself,  
and none of us dies to himself;  
if we live, we live to the Lord,  
and if we die, we die to the Lord.

Paul's comment reminds us that "whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living" (14:8f.).

The ethical realism of Paul was rooted deeply in his eschatology. Man is to glorify God in his body because the body is to be glorified. But what does he mean by the term body (*soma*)? In I Corinthians 6:13 he implies that food and the stomach have no place in the redeemed body, and he roundly rebukes those whose "god is the belly" (Phil. 3:19). It is in this connection that Paul's heritage needs to be considered.

The Pharisees, among whom Paul was educated, are represented in two different ways. At one place it is said:

For the earth shall then assuredly restore the dead,  
[Which it now receives, in order to preserve them].  
It shall make no change in their form.  
But as it has received, so shall it restore them,  
And as I delivered them unto it, so also shall it raise them.  
(II Baruch 50:2).<sup>13</sup>

Yet Josephus, another Pharisee, says they believed that good men are "removed into other bodies" (*Wars*, II.8.14).<sup>14</sup>

Many interpreters find both views in Paul. In I Corinthians 15:35-50, both by analogy and appeal to Scripture, he sustains

12 *Op. cit.*, p. 236.

13 *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha*, ed. R. H. Charles (Oxford: Clarendon, 1913), II,508.

14 *Op. cit.*, p. 676.

the idea that there is a difference between the psychic or "soulish" body in which man now exists and the spiritual body of the resurrected. His first analogy compares the difference between the two bodies to that between a grain of wheat and that which grows from it. "You sow not the body which is to be. . . . But God gives it a body as he has chosen" (vv. 37f.).

Paul does not intend to teach that this is a natural process with the powers of germination in the dead body. He has not abandoned the belief that God raises the dead — "God gives it a body." His second analogy compares the difference to that which is seen in the four kinds of flesh (v. 39), but this is not so clear. The same lack of clarity attends the third analogy (v. 40), but the two bodies are apparently compared to the difference between the earthly and heavenly bodies, or the various heavenly bodies. Seed, flesh, bodies — but the most fitting analogy is that of seed.

He appeals to Scripture with what may be a Christian hymn, as the Moffatt translation suggests (15:42-44).

What is sown is mortal,  
What rises is immortal;  
sown inglorious,  
    it rises in glory;  
sown in weakness,  
    it rises in power  
sown an animate body,  
    it rises a spiritual body.

The translation "animate" is literally correct, for neither the word "natural" (ASV) nor the word "physical" (RSV) brings out the full meaning of *psychikon* (psychic, soulish). The animate body is man in his historical existence as a living soul, while the spiritual body is man beyond polarity, the body transformed for spiritual activity in a spiritual state or condition.

The appeal to Genesis 2:7 precipitates the analogy of the two Adams (cf. Rom. 5:12-18). Philo (*On the Creation*, 134; *Allegorical Interpretations*, I.31) taught that the man of Genesis 1:26 was the ideal man and came first, before the earthly man of Genesis 2:7. Paul repudiates this speculation based on Platonic archetypes and teaches that the earthly man comes first and the spiritual man comes afterward, at the resurrection. Again Moffatt's translation brings out the poetic structure (I Cor. 15:45-49):

The first man, Adam became an animate being,  
 the last Adam a life-giving Spirit;  
 but the animate, not the spiritual, comes first,  
 and only then the spiritual.

Man the first is from the earth, material;  
 Man the second is from heaven.  
 As man the material is, so are the material;  
 as man the heavenly is, so are the heavenly.  
 Thus, as we have borne the likeness of material man,  
 so we are to bear the likeness of the heavenly man.

The Christological analogy is again employed in the ethical lamentations of Philippians 3:18-21. Philippi, as a Roman military colony, was directly responsible to the capital in Rome, and her citizens were not subject to the legal political situation (Acts 16:12,21). With this in mind Paul wrote:

For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their end is destruction, their god is the belly, and their glory is in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. But our commonwealth is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power which enables him even to subject all things to himself (Philippians 3:18-21).

Commonwealth (*politeuma*) means “the capital or native city, which keeps the citizens on its registers.”<sup>15</sup> From this capital or native city a Savior (the word used for the Roman Emperor since 48 B.C.) will come and change the lowly body or “body of our humiliation” (ASV) “to be like his glorious body” by an energy (*energeia*) which will enable him “to subject all things to himself.” The body of humiliation is the psychic body, and the body of glory is the spiritual body. It is by the energy of Christ, not by some innate principle of germination, that this transformation takes place.

In II Corinthians 5:1-5 Paul makes a distinction between what he calls “the earthly house (*oikia*) of this tent” in which we now live and the “house (*oikia*) not made with hands, eternal in the heavens” (5:1). The earthly house, which he compares to a tent, appears to be identical with the “earthen vessels” (4:7) and “the outer nature” which “is wasting away” (4:16).

<sup>15</sup> Ethelbert Stauffer, *New Testament Theology*, tr. John Marsh (London: SCM, 1955), p. 296.

Is it possible that the "inner nature" (4:16) is to be identified with "the house not made with hands," so that we already "have a building from God" (5:1)?

Apparently Paul thinks of this further housing as taking place at death, although the renewal of the inner nature and the putting on of the new nature are prerequisites to this possibility (Col. 3:10; Eph. 4:24; Gal. 3:27). Inner nature, house not made with hands, spiritual body: these three, are they identical, or three stages in the redemptive process? Many commentaries make this identification, at least the last two, but not one has produced references to prove that the "eternal house" is the same as the "spiritual body."<sup>16</sup> The "white robes" of the martyrs in Revelation 6:11 do not rule out a resurrection in Revelation 20:4. In the Apochrypha, the parallel idea in the Christian apocalypse of *The Ascension of Isaiah* has many references to "garments" (4:11, 16f.; 7:22; 8:14; 9:2, 9, 11,17f.), but the spirits who are clothed with these garments are always absent from the body. This is precisely the idea of Paul. Those who are clothed are "away from the body and at home with the Lord" (II Cor. 5:8).

The crucial question in the concept of the resurrection body is precipitated by two chapters (I Cor. 15, II Cor. 5). It is simply this: is *this* body transformed or is *another* body superimposed? In the Gnostic controversy of the second century the defenders of orthodoxy emphatically endorsed the former. The old Roman creed spoke of "the resurrection of the flesh," the creed of the Church of Aquileia saying even "this flesh."<sup>17</sup>

Tertullian's treatise *On the Resurrection of the Flesh* (c. A.D. 208) may be considered representative of those who opposed the Gnostic disparagement of the flesh when he says: "And so the flesh shall rise again, wholly in every man, in its own identity, in its absolute integrity" (63).<sup>18</sup> The Catechism of the Council of Trent reaffirmed this position (Part I, art.

16 Alfred Plummer, *II Corinthians* in *The International Critical Commentary* (New York: Scribner, 1915), pp. 140-164; Hans Windisch, *Meyer's Kommentar* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1924), pp. 157-178; Clarence Tucker Craig, I.B., X, 327. Cf. Joachim Jeremias, in *New Testament Studies*, II (Feb., 1956), 151-159.

17 *Creeds of Christendom*, ed. Philip Schaff (New York: Harper, 1877), II, 49.

18 *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, ed. A. Roberts, J. Donaldson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans reprint), III, 593. Cf. Augustine, *Enchiridion*, 89, *The City of God*, 22:19-21; Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, pp. 79-86.

11) : ". . . the identical body, which belongs to each of us during life, shall, though corrupt and dissolved into original dust, be raised up again to life . . . . Man is, therefore, to rise again in the same body with which he served God, or was a slave to the devil. . . ."<sup>19</sup>

Difficulties arise in isolation from the concepts of the corporeality of man and cosmic redemption, but one of the ablest apologists of the Roman Catholic Church is able to relate the belief to modern thought and remove much of the reproach heaped upon it. His main argument is:

Matter increasingly becomes material for the spirit to work upon. In man, body has universal significance. It is not only the highest stage in bodily development, but corporeity in its very essence. . . . That endless series of configurations which is the human body must be included in the resurrected body. It must have a new dimension, that of time, but time raised to the power of eternity with the result that its history is included in its present, and all the successive moments of its past exist in an absolute now. . . . In baptism the "new man" is born. Thereafter he lives, though cloaked by the old, in the inner core of the believer. From now on life is a mysterious interchange of becoming and ceasing to be. In all actions, in all happenings, the death of the old man and the resurrection of the new are in a continuous process.<sup>20</sup>

He has arrived at a position not far from some Protestant writers.

Historic Protestantism also has adopted the idea of the resurrection of "the self-same bodies, and none other" (*Westminster Confession of Faith*, ch. 32).<sup>21</sup> Historical studies have collected almost all of the available sources and concluded that the historic faith has always contended for both the identity of the resurrection body with the present body and the transformation of the body by the power of God, without holding to a materialistic concept of flesh that would mean only resuscitation.<sup>22</sup>

The corporate concept linked with cosmic redemption has again delivered the doctrine from no little disrepute, and creation and redemption are again seen as corollaries. A

19 *The Catechism of the Council of Trent*, tr. John A. McHugh, Charles J. Callan (New York: J. F. Wagner, 1934), p. 125.

20 Romano Guardini, *The Last Things*, tr. Charlotte E. Forsyth, Grace B. Branham (London: Burns & Oates, 1954), pp. 63, 68, 71f.

21 Schaff, *op. cit.*, III, 671.

22 John T. Darragh, *The Resurrection of the Flesh* (London: S.P.C.K., 1921).

representative writer states: "The body will rise again because it is a part of the material creation which is being redeemed in order that it may return to God."<sup>23</sup> The last two quotations, coming as they do from Anglican theologians, are of profound significance, when it is remembered that Plato at times has almost been the patron saint of this tradition. Here, as in the Report of the Commission on Christian Doctrine, despite its cautious reservations, the concept of corporeality has triumphed.

Rejecting the idea of a reconstitution of the physico-chemical elements, the report says:

While . . . we ought to reject quite frankly the literalistic belief in a future resuscitation of the actual physical frame which is laid in the tomb, it is to be affirmed, none the less, that in the life of the world to come the soul or spirit will still have its appropriate organ of expression and activity, which is one with the body of earthly life in the sense that it bears the same relation to the same spiritual entity.<sup>24</sup>

The idea that another body is superimposed to displace the animate body also has an interesting history. Some of the early church fathers ran into trouble at this point. In response to the challenge of Celsus, a pagan critic, Origen maintained that it was the Stoics, not the Christians, who said that the body would return to its original nature. His rejection of the idea of identity pushes the idea of transformation too far. "For we hold that, as from the grain of corn an ear rises up, so in the body there lies a certain principle which is not corrupted from which the body is raised in incorruption."<sup>25</sup>

This is far from what Paul said, for Origen has based the resurrection on "a certain principle," not on God, an idea that sounds like the natural resurrection of the body. He explains the idea as follows:

In the first place, it bears this body after it has put off the former body which was necessary at first but which is now superfluous in its second state. In the second place, it puts a body on top of that which it possessed formerly, because it needs a better garment for the purer, ethereal, and heavenly regions.<sup>26</sup>

Yet Origen clearly rejects the idea of Aristotle "that besides

23 Oscar Hardmann, *The Resurrection of the Body* (London: S.P.C.K., 1934), p. 94.

24 *Doctrine in the Church of England* (London: S.P.C.K., 1938), p. 209.

25 *Contra Celsum*, V. 23, tr. Henry Chadwick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953), p. 281.

26 *Ibid.*, VII. 32, p. 420.

this body which is composed of the four elements, there is a fifth body which is entirely other than and diverse from our present body." They "receive the same ones which they possessed during life, only transformed from a worse to a better condition" (*De principiis* 3.6.6.).<sup>27</sup>

This topcoat theory has been revived in modern theology. The struggle between the idea which made room for intermediate state and the resurrection of this body and that which held that the spiritual body is put on immediately after death was debated in the time of Schleiermacher, who, though wavering, retained the former as that which seemed to be "this more Biblical idea."<sup>28</sup> Some of his later disciples, however, fell on the other side of the fence. In the light of contemporary eschatology one is amazed at the dogmatic liberalism of some nineteenth-century writings.

The Baptist theologian William Newton Clarke comes into the discussion asserting that, for Jesus, "resurrection is not distinguished in any way from continued existence"; for Paul, "the restoration of the body that died has no place whatever"; and that those who believe "that the very bodies that have died will be restored to life" have "gone with the Pharisees." This body is "abandoned, to be known no more," and "man, complete in all that personality requires, stands up alive beyond the great change that we call death, having the same hour died and risen again."<sup>29</sup>

The Presbyterian theologian, J. M. Shaw, speaks words worthy of Plato when he says that redemption of the body is "the laying aside of the tainted body of earth, leaving that body in the grave to the process of dissolution and decay in order to be clothed with a body which shall be a fitter expression of the spirit, a body whose identity with the body of earth is an identity not of material elements, but of vital organizing constructive principle."<sup>30</sup> The first part of this statement sounds far more like Plato than like Paul, and it is

27 G. W. Butterworth, *Origen on First Principles* (London: S.P.C.K., 1936), p. 252.

28 *The Christian Faith*, tr. H. R. Mackintosh, J. S. Stewart (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1928), p. 712.

29 *An Outline of Christian Theology* (New York: Scribner, 1894), pp. 453-458.

30 *Life After Death* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1945), p. 35. Cf. his *Christian Doctrine in Outline* (London: Lutterworth, 1953), pp. 317-330.

difficult to see why a view of this type should use the term resurrection at all.

The scientific study of man and the revival of biblical theology have begun to modify these views.<sup>31</sup> One of the strongest supporters of realized eschatology has introduced the principle of corporate solidarity into the system, and the result sounds at times like corporate and cosmic redemption. John A. T. Robinson's main thesis, mingled with some questionable exegesis, hangs on his definitions of individuality and solidarity.<sup>32</sup> The principle of individuality is not matter, as the followers of Boethius thought, but God's call of each person into a relation to Himself. The body (*sōma*), constituting man in a network of physical and mental relationships, is the symbol not of individuality, but of solidarity, unredeemed or redeemed.

Corporate solidarity in the unredeemed state is "the body of sin" (Rom. 6:6, ASV), "the body of this death" (7:24, ASV). He speaks not of individual bodies that are to be redeemed, but of "the redemption of our body" (8:23, ASV), and the transformation of "the body of our humiliation" (Phil. 3:21, ASV). The corporate solidarity redeemed is the body of Christ, so that one solidarity is replaced by another. Corporate sin and corporate salvation are correlatives. In summary:

The body represents solidarity; and the denial of its redemption and restoration immediately upon death stands for the great truth that no one can fully be saved apart from his brother, or indeed apart from the whole creation. It is only in the last day when all things are restored that the new corporality will be complete.<sup>33</sup>

It is unfortunate that Robinson has overworked the somatic principle to bring himself into conflict with some passages for which his explanations are inadequate. He does not ignore Paul's use of "bodies" in Romans 1:24, 8:11, 12:1, Corinthians 6:15, and Ephesians 5:28, but he thinks this is only "a substitute for the reflexive pronoun" and warns against "hardening of this into an absolute distinction."<sup>34</sup> With this one can agree, but this does not exclude the fact that Paul expected "our bodies" as members of "the body of Christ" to be redeemed.

<sup>31</sup> James John Heller, "The Resurrection of Man," *Theology Today*, XV (July 1958), 217-229.

<sup>32</sup> *In the End, God* (London: James Clarke, 1950), pp. 83-98; *The Body* (Chicago: Regnery, 1952), pp. 49-83.

<sup>33</sup> *In the End, God*, p. 97f.

<sup>34</sup> *The Body*, pp. 29, 79.

This same threat to identity of the individual may be seen in his identification of the spirit of man with the Spirit of God.<sup>35</sup> Spirit is a term of relationship, but it is going too far to assert that the natural man has "no spirit of his own." This would make Paul's comparison of the Spirit of God with the spirit of man difficult to grasp (II Cor. 2:11), and the witness of God's Spirit with "our spirit" would hardly make sense (Rom. 8:16).

Paul's view, expressed in the classical passage of this whole debate, makes perfect sense and we see no good reason to reject the traditional interpretation. At the *parousia*, "he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence" (II Cor. 4:14). At the present, while "our outer nature is wasting away," "our inner nature" (*esō anthropos*) is being renewed (4:16). At death, the "inner nature" or "inner man" will be clothed with immortality to await the resurrection and the judgment (5:1-10). The topcoat theory, despite its heavenly setting, is really the transmigration of the soul or spirit from one body to another, rather than the transformation of the lowly body into a glorious body.

#### THE RESURRECTION OF JUDGMENT

The discussion thus far has been confined to those who will be raised to eternal life with God. This leaves two important questions unanswered, the first of which has already been suggested: are the righteous *alone* raised? It has been noted that Isaiah 26:19 speaks of the resurrection as a reward to the righteous. II Maccabees 7:14 speaks of those for whom "there will be no resurrection to life!" Josephus reports the Pharisees as teaching that "good men alone are removed into other bodies" (*Wars*, II.8.14).

Jesus speaks not only of "the resurrection of the just" (Luke 14:14), but of "those who are accounted worthy to attain to that age and to the resurrection from the dead," who "cannot die any more, because they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection" (Luke 20:35f.). At no place do the Synoptic Gospels speak of the resurrection of the wicked, and the same is true of the Pauline Epistles, unless one adopts the highly dubious translation of *telos* in I Corinthians 15:24 as "the rest" rather than "the end."

<sup>35</sup> *In the End, God*, p. 84.

*The Second Resurrection.* On the other hand, Daniel 12:2 says: "And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." It may well be that this particular passage does not teach the resurrection of all but only the resurrection of the conspicuously good and the notoriously wicked, but it does include wicked men as well as righteous. It clearly goes beyond Isaiah 26:19, which speaks only of a single resurrection, namely of the righteous.

John 5:28f. reports Jesus as teaching: "Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come forth, those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment." In Acts, Paul not only identifies himself as a Pharisee (23:6) but preaches "a resurrection of both the just and the unjust" (24:15).

Must one conclude that the Synoptic Gospels and the Pauline Epistles teach one view and the Acts and the Johannine writings another, or is there a third possibility? The common authorship of Luke 14:14, 20:35f., and Acts 24:15 would make Luke guilty of self-contradiction if the two views are incompatible.

A vigorous debate between Paul Althaus and Carl Stange has raised this question afresh. Stange, in his book *The End of All Things*, argues that the godless perish at physical death. "Of the worthlessness of the life of the godless they can themselves, to be sure, have no consciousness, because they become nothing with their nothingness." "Consequently they live only in relation to this earthly and passing world and pass away with it. When death comes, there is nothing in them that survives death. One cannot even speak of an annihilation when there is nothing which can be annihilated." "The eternal death of the godless is not annihilation but only revelation of the distance from God of the godless, i.e. their nothingness."<sup>36</sup>

Althaus, who rejects both the idea of an immediate or an ultimate extinction of the wicked, opposes Stange's view of immediate extinction on the grounds that this would rule out a final judgment of all men.<sup>37</sup> This objection, however, would not

<sup>36</sup> *Das Ende aller Dinge* (Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1930), pp. 147, 158f., 198.

<sup>37</sup> *Die letzten Dinge*, 5. Auflage (Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1959), pp. 189f.

apply to the theory of ultimate extinction after the resurrection and the judgment. The problem of ultimate extinction calls for further consideration.

Jesus surely taught a judgment of all men. It will be more tolerable for the people of Sodom and Gomorrah, of Tyre and Sidon, on the day of judgment than for those who rejected the opportunity afforded them (Matt. 10:15; 11:22,24). The men of Nineveh and the queen of the south "will arise at the judgment" to condemn the generation of Jesus (12:41f.). At "the close of the age" the wicked and the righteous are to be separated (13:40f.,49f.), and "all the nations" will be gathered before the Son of Man (25:32).

Paul taught that "every man will receive his commendation from God" when the Lord comes (I Cor. 4:5), and that "God judges those outside" (5:13). "The saints will judge the world" (6:2), but they are to examine themselves lest they be "condemned along with the world" (11:32). God will judge "every man according to his works: to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; but for those who are factious and do not obey the truth, but obey wickedness, there will be wrath and fury" (Rom. 2:6-8).

The judgment of God on human sin is both a process (*krisis*) and a pronouncement (*krima*). The process may be set in motion either by the moral law of God at work in creation and human conscience, or by the love of God confronting the creation corrupted into a system of sin or *kosmos*.

The law of God "brings wrath" (Rom. 4:15). Wrath is a historical process of retribution "revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness" (1:18, ASV). Ungodliness brings ignorance of God and darkens the understanding of man so that he substitutes idols for God and enslaves himself to that which is less than his Creator (1:18-25). Unrighteousness is the corruption of man's relation to man, as ungodliness disturbs his relation to God, and the network of carnalities and animosities works the law of sin and retribution as the wrath of God.

The wrath of God brought by law belongs to the retributive process, God's righteous judgment (*dikaiokrisia*), which is to be revealed on the day when the wrath of God has woven the web of human woe. The pronouncement is the child of the

process, and those involved in the *krisis* will be brought to the *krima*.

The present process has a fearful prospect: "By your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed" (Rom. 2:5). Behind the high dam of God's kindness, forbearance, and patience has gathered the walled-up wrath of God, to be released when the process of retribution, now hidden to the ungodly, is revealed in final fury.

The law that brings wrath, and the love that brings redemption, are closely related, for wrath is rejected love. God's wrath rests on those who disobey God's beloved Son (John 3:36). The judgment of love divides men at both the points of faith and works. "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should have eternal life" (v. 16). God's intention is that the mission of His son will bring salvation, not condemnation, but it divides men into the "saved" and the "condemned" (vv. 17f.). The real *krisis* (judgment) rests on the fact that "light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (v. 19). The present *krisis* divides men again into those who do evil and those who do the truth, those who hide and those who are in the open (vv. 20f.).

The present process of judgment brought by love also has future prospects. He who hears the word of the Son and believes in the Father who commissioned Him "does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life" (John 5:24). This is the hour that "now is," but there is also the coming hour when all the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God "and come forth, those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment" (5:29). On this particular passage one can fully agree with Augustine that there is a spiritual resurrection at the present for those who believe, and a bodily resurrection for all at the last day (*City of God*, XX.6.)

The present process pertains primarily to the *kosmos* (world), the system of sin ruled by the power of darkness. "Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the ruler of this world be cast out" (John 12:31). The Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, "will convince the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in me; of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no more;

of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged" (16:8-11). The cross of Christ is the *krisis* of the *kosmos*. Escape from the *krisis* is escape from the *kosmos*.

The *kosmos* is sin incorporated, as the *koinōnia* is the Spirit incorporated. *Kosmos* is the corrupted creation over which death and darkness reign, and he who loves the world has rejected the love of God.

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If any one loves the world, love for the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world passes away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides for ever" (I John 2:15-17).

The process of judgment (*krisis*) points to the pronouncement of judgment (*krima*). As there is a process of perfection that leads to salvation so there is a process of retribution that leads to condemnation. One process is the *koinōnia* that is life, and the other is the *kosmos* that leads to death. The result of the process of retribution is "the resurrection of judgment" (5:29).

The pronouncement of judgment at the end of the process is pictured in apocalyptic language that leads to different interpretations. Since the time of Augustine the first resurrection of Revelation 20:5 has been identified with the dead who hear the voice of the Son of God and live accordingly (John 5:25). Until the time of Augustine the two resurrections of Revelation 20:4-6 were identified with the twofold resurrection of John 5:29, both resurrections being resurrections of the body.

The idea of a spiritual resurrection led to excesses even in the New Testament times. II Timothy 2:17f. mentions a gangrene gospel expounded by such heretics as "Hymenaeus and Philetus, who have swerved from the truth by holding that the resurrection is past already," and this was making such a headway that it was "upsetting the faith of some."

Considerable light has been shed on this movement by the discovery of some unknown Gnostic writings at Nag Hammadi, Egypt, in 1945. *The Letter to Reginos* mentions a spiritual resurrection of the faithful in terms of a syncretistic sun-cult that made the faithful appear as sunbeams of Christ who at the moment of death return to the fountain of light from which they came. It states:

But as we have come to manifestation in the world while we have put on the Christ we are rays of the Christ and we are borne by Him until we sink down. That is our death in his life. We are drawn up to heaven as rays of the sun, with nothing to hinder us. That is the spiritual resurrection which "devours" the psychical and fleshly resurrection.<sup>38</sup>

This teaching is built around Pauline mysticism, but it has become so mixed with Gnostic notions that the resurrection is reduced to a system of sunbeams coming and going between heaven and earth.

Augustine's theory, generally known as amillennialism, has much of the same tendency toward spiritualizing the resurrection. The first resurrection of Revelation 20:5f. is made a resurrection of souls, although the second resurrection is retained as a resurrection of bodies (*City of God*, XX.10). The Southern Baptist leader B. H. Carroll made both resurrections spiritual, the resurrection of souls.<sup>39</sup> Augustine explains that "the spiritual" abandoned the view that the first resurrection was bodily and adopted the notion that there is a "first and spiritual resurrection" (*City of God*, XX.7).

It is never made clear why he gave up the chiliastic view of two bodily resurrections, which he held when he wrote *De Catechizandis Rudibus* (22-25), but this is the point at which the idea of a spiritual resurrection receives ecclesiastical sanction. Previously Justin Martyr was not so "spiritual" and spoke definitely of two bodily resurrections (*Dialogue with Trypho*, 81). Irenaeus of Lyon, the classic chiliast, was not so definite, but he followed along the same lines (*Against Heresies*, V. 23f.).

At the risk of being called "unspiritual," many find it necessary, on exegetical grounds, to identify the two resurrections of Revelation 20:4-6 with "the resurrection of life" and "the resurrection of judgment" in John 5:29. Any spiritual resurrection must be found in "those who hear" and live in John 5:25. The first resurrection is the resurrection to life, the resurrection of the righteous, but it is as much bodily as the

38 G. Quispel, "The Jung Codex and Its Significance," in F. L. Cross, tr. and ed., *The Jung Codex* (London: Mowbray, 1955), p. 55.

39 B. H. Carroll, "The Book of Revelation," *An Interpretation of the English Bible* (New York: Revell, 1913), pp. 229-231. E. A. McDowell, *The Meaning and Message of the Book of Revelation* (Nashville: Broadman, 1951), pp. 190-200; Ray Summers, *The Life Beyond* (Nashville: Broadman), pp. 87-92; and Wayne E. Barton, "The Millennium is Now," *The Arkansas Baptist*, June 14, 1962, p. 7, are much nearer to Augustine.

second. The second resurrection is the resurrection to "everlasting contempt" (Dan. 12:2), the resurrection of "the unjust" (Acts 24:15), and "the resurrection of judgment" (John 5:29).

Augustine's "spiritual" interpretation requires the word *ezēsan* (they came to life again) to have one meaning in Revelation 20:4 and another in Revelation 20:5. It would read like this:

They came to life again (*ezēsan*) . . . .

The rest of the dead did not come to life again (*ezēsan*) . . . .

Exegesis is out of hand if the meaning of a word can change so quickly. Obviously the word means the same in each statement, one being only the negative of the other. The first resurrection has reference to those who come to life before the thousand years; the second resurrection has reference to those who did not come alive again until the thousand years ended.<sup>40</sup>

It is rather inconsistent to take a part of Augustine's fanciful exegesis and reject the rest. He goes all the way in his spiritual interpretation. The millennium is either world history or church history, those who sit on thrones are the rulers of the Church, the first resurrection goes on through the whole of church history, and the Church is the camp of the saints (*City of God*, XX.1-12). Such exegesis is not "spiritual"; it is sheer de-eschatologizing that confuses the interim community of the Church with the ultimate community of the kingdom. Stripped of figurative language, it makes the relative absolute and the absolute relative.

Revelation would indeed be a riddle if it were necessary to resort to this procedure in discerning its meaning. This theory requires all who participate in the first resurrection to participate also in the second, a conclusion for which the passage gives not the slightest suggestion. All those who participate in the second resurrection are scheduled for the second death, even as participation in the first resurrection exempts from the second death. "Blessed and holy is he who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power . . ." (Rev. 20:6).

40 George E. Ladd, *Crucial Questions About the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952), pp. 143f.; *Review and Expositor*, LVII (Apr. 1960), 169. Cf. Traugott Holtz, *Die Christologie der Apokalypse des Johannes* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1962), p. 183.

*The Second Death.* The second death has been debated even more than the second resurrection. The term is a Rabbinic expression found in the New Testament only in the book of Revelation (2:11; 20:6,14; 21:8), but it is identified with "the lake of fire" (19:20; 20:10,14f.; 21:8), an idea with a variety of apocalyptic associations. It is a great mistake, in reaction to literalism, to brush aside the picture language of the Scriptures as if it is meaningless to modern men. Existential eschatology often employs terms strangely similar to those found in the Bible, even when the interpretations differ.

Two associated pictures merge in the New Testament picture of the second death. The first is that of the abyss, a term found in the Septuagint translation for *Tehom* (deep) in the second verse of the Bible. In the Old Testament the primeval chaos comes to mean the place of intermediate punishment for the enemies of God, and it appears in the New Testament with the same meaning (Luke 8:31; Rom. 10:7; Rev. 9:1; 17:8; 20:3). The place of final punishment is the lake of fire, the second death. Here again it is very important to distinguish between the intermediate state of the godless and their ultimate state.

The second picture is that of *Gehenna*. *Hades* is the intermediate place of punishment for wicked men (Rev. 1:18; 6:8; 20:13f.), but they are cast into the lake of fire at the final judgment (20:14). The place of the final punishment of wicked men is *Gehenna*, a term used only once in the New Testament outside the teaching of Jesus (Jas. 3:6), but it merges in meaning with the idea of the lake of fire, the second death, in such passages as Matthew 25:41: "Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels." There God is able to destroy both body and soul (Matt. 10:28; cf. 5:22,29f.; 18:9; 23:15,33). The destruction is compared to "the furnace of fire" (Matt. 13:42), "the outer darkness" (8:12; 25:30), and to "eternal punishment" (25:46; cf. 24:51). The picture of *Gehenna* comes from the valley of Hinnom, the place where the worshippers of Molech burned their children in sacrifice (II Kings 16:3; 23:10; Jer. 7:31; Ps. 106:31,37f.; II Chron. 28:3; 33:6). This is a fitting description for the final punishment of those, defiled by sin and outside the city of God, who are excluded from the fellowship of God. Man, alienated from God, men and God's whole creation, is a sealed unit.

At other places in the New Testament the wicked are said to "suffer the punishment of eternal destruction and exclusion

from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might" (II Thess. 1:9), to be devoured by a consuming fire (Heb. 6:8; 10:27; 12:29), or simply to perish (Rom. 2:12; John 3:16). All of this agrees with the general picture of *Gehenna*.

Here it may be remarked that Jean Paul Sartre's *No Exit*, which begins and ends in hell, comes much nearer the biblical idea of *Gehenna* than is commonly supposed. It has well been called the *Divine Comedy* of modern man, who tastes of hell in the present life. "To live without an answer is like living over a void, a terrifying abyss."<sup>41</sup>

Rudolf Bultmann finds two trains of thought in Paul's view of death.<sup>42</sup> The first is rooted in the Old Testament-Jewish tradition and thinks of death as the punishment for sin, committed in transgression of the law and condemned by the day of judgment (Rom. 1:32; 2:6-11; 5:12ff.; 6:16,23). The second goes beyond the juristic tradition and concludes that death is an inherent consequence of sin (Rom. 8:13; Gal. 6:8).

John McQuarrie has suggested that the second is a deeper insight into the first. "The punishment is contained in the sin, it is not something externally added."<sup>43</sup> McQuarrie also makes the interesting observation that this is very near to the view in Dante's *Divine Comedy* (*Inferno*, cantos V, XXIII), in which hell is interpreted as "the specific punishment of each sin as nothing other than the disintegration of personality which arises out of the sin itself."<sup>44</sup> What could the final disintergration be other than destruction of the very structure of being — death?

*Gehenna* has not always been interpreted as a place of eternal punishment. Origen, the so-called father of universalism, thought of the fire as a process of purification by which man along with the whole of creation would be restored to his original unity with God. The designation *apokatastasis* is found in Acts 3:21, where it has reference to the establishment of "all that God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old," but Origen appealed more to I Corinthians 15:26-28, Romans 5:17, 11:36, and Philippians 2:5-11.

41 Carl Michalson, *The Hinge of History* (New York: Scribner's, 1959), p. 114.

42 *Theology of the New Testament*, tr. Kendrik Grobel (New York: Scribner's, 1951), p. 114.

43 *An Existentialist Theology* (London: SCM, 1955), p. 122.

44 *Ibid.*

The principles behind his argument revolved around the relation of God and man, and the reincarnation of the soul. The love of God and the freedom of man keep open the possibility that the rebellion of man will finally surrender to the will of God in Christ. The reincarnation of the soul, in the framework of a cyclical view of history, requires the ultimate restoration of souls to their pre-existent state of purity before they return to dwell in other bodies. Origen abandons the idea that choices made in this life have a decisive character, and substitutes a cyclical view of history, characteristic of Greek thought, for the linear view found in Scripture.<sup>45</sup>

*Apokatastasis* was condemned as a heresy in the first article of the Second Council of Constantinople in 553, but it lingered as a possibility to burst forth again in modern theology. Lessing, especially in *The Education of the Human Race* (1780), introduced the principle of gradual human development; and Schleiermacher applied this to eschatology with the conclusion that eternal damnation would not exist in relation to eternal blessedness ("once the former exists, the latter can exist no longer") and that "through the power of redemption there will one day be a universal restoration of all souls."<sup>46</sup>

Evolutionary development of human life, in which a process of decisions displaces a once-for-all decision, was applied to life beyond death. According to this view the Reformation made a mistake in rejecting Dante's *Purgatorio* and retaining his *Inferno*. They should, it is claimed, have retained the process of purification that would look forward to the perfection of all souls.

In the German-speaking world Paul Althaus has rightly resisted this principle of universalism as an abandonment of the eternal decisiveness of the decisions made by man before a holy God.<sup>47</sup> Yet Ethelbert Stauffer, the colleague of Althaus in Erlangen, has used irresistible grace and the will of God to substantiate his arguments for a "universal homecoming."<sup>48</sup> Stauffer's appeal to such New Testament passages as Matthew

45 Jean Danielou, *Origen*, tr. Walter Mitchell (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1955), pp. 287-298; Gotthold Mueller, "Origenes und die Apokatastasis," *Theologische Zeitschrift*, 14.3 (Mai-Juni 1958), 174-190. Mueller has collected most of the references.

46 Schleiermacher, *op. cit.*, pp. 721f.

47 Althaus, *op. cit.*, pp. 185-187.

48 Stauffer, *op. cit.*, pp. 222-225.

16:19, 18:18f., and John 20:23 to justify prayers for the dead and the possibility of salvation for men after death is desperate exegesis, to say the least. Luke 12:59 ("I tell you, you will never get out till you have paid the very last copper") is supposed to speak of "purgatorial and expiatory suffering." "The universalism of the divine creativity requires and guarantees the divine salvation." Even "the powers of hell" are disarmed and reconciled to God, according to Stauffer's interpretation of Paul.

In the English-speaking world universalism has not only had its blooming time, but it has led to schism and the formation of a Universalist denomination. The most important theologian in this movement was Hosea Ballou (1771-1852), the son of a Baptist minister. In his rebellion against Calvinism he propounded a doctrine of the love of God and the freedom of man which ruled out eternal punishment and asserted that sovereign love would finally save all. His system is elaborated in *A Treatise on the Atonement* (1805).

P. T. Forsyth, the renowned Congregationalist who is having such a revival of attention, believed: "We threw away too much when we threw Purgatory clean out of doors. We threw out the baby with the dirty water of his bath. There are more conversions on the other side than on this, if the crisis of death opens the eyes as I have said."<sup>49</sup> C. H. Dodd, another Congregationalist, is very sure that Paul's theology requires a universalist conclusion, and with this he agrees when he says: "If we really believe in One God, and believe that Jesus Christ, in what He was and what He did, truly shows us what God's character and His attitude toward men are like, then it is very difficult to think ourselves out of the belief that somehow His love will find a way of bringing all men into unity with Him."<sup>50</sup>

F. Townley Lord, a Baptist theologian and leader, has a similar word to say: "If we accept the gospel portrait of God; if, that is, we think of Him as the loving Father eager to go to such great lengths for the redemption of His children, we are compelled to envisage a period of continued life in which the divine grace and love can continue their redemptive work."<sup>51</sup>

49 *This Life and the Next* (New York: Macmillan, 1918), p. 40.

50 *Epistle of Paul to the Romans* (New York: Harper, 1932), p. 186.

51 *Conquest of Death* (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1942), p. 144.

Nels F. S. Ferre is very certain about the universalist conclusion: "The total logic of the deepest message of the New Testament, namely, that God both can and wants to save all, is unanswerable."<sup>52</sup>

A Calvinistic theologian as conservative as James Orr felt the appeal of universalism to the extent that he was unwilling to close the door to the possibility. With reservations, he says: "The conclusion I arrive at is, that we have not elements of a complete solution, and we ought not to attempt it. What visions beyond these may be, what larger hopes, what ultimate harmonies, if such there are in store, will come in God's good time; it is not ours to anticipate them, or lift the veil where God has left it drawn!"<sup>53</sup> Few are likely to be satisfied with this noncommittal point of view, and few have been in the past.

The list of universalists could be multiplied, but the Anglican Bishop John A. T. Robinson provides the clearest statement in brief summary of the so-called "larger hope" that all will be saved.<sup>54</sup> The strength of his statement is found in his attempt to relate the work of God in Christ to the reality of human freedom and the seriousness of hell. His discussion really returns to Origen's teaching on the love of God and the freedom of man. But as long as we think in the context of love and freedom there are always two possibilities.

Irresistible love and forced freedom are nonsense, and if there are no realities to correspond to the possibilities, it is doubletalk to say that heaven and hell are being seriously considered. Robinson's one destiny, despite his professed existential viewpoint of subjectivity, is as "objectivized" as the view that sees two possible destinies. One is unable to remain in the realm of impossible possibilities. Robinson fails to see that hell is being confronted by rejected *agapē*, that *orgē* (wrath) is spurned *agapē*. His supposed subjectivism makes heaven a blur and hell a bluff. It preserves neither the freedom of man nor the seriousness of hell.

A more serious challenge to the doctrine of eternal punishment comes from the camp of conditional immortality. Conditional immortality contends that man is by nature mortal

52 *Evil and the Christian Faith* (New York: Harper, 1947), p. 118.

53 James Orr, *The Christian View of God and the World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1947), p. 345.

54 *In the End, God* (London: James Clarke, 1950), pp. 108-123.

and that those who do not attain immortality or receive immortality as God's gift are extinguished either at death or at some point beyond the final judgment. As early as the time of Justin Martyr the Platonic idea of the soul's natural immortality was rejected (*Dialogue*, V), and Arnobius of Sicca gave even greater stress to immortality as God's boon to mortal souls (*Against the Heathen*, Book II). It was condemned at the Fifth Lateran Council in 1513.

At the time of the Reformation the theory was associated primarily with the name of Faustus Socinus; and the Jewish philosopher Spinoza, building on Aristotle, believed that only the active intellect is immortal (*Ethics*, V, 41). A considerable stir was caused in 1706 when the Anglican Henry Dodwell of Oxford, in his *Epistolary Discourse Concerning the Soul's Immortality*, connected the gift of immortality with the reception of Christian baptism. Since the publication of *The Life of Christ* by the Congregationalist Edward White (1846, 1875) the theory of conditional immortality has gained force.

In the day when many evangelicals feared that evolution would undo the Christian faith, there were men who employed scientific evolution as an argument for immortality. Men of the stature of Henry Drummond, whom D. L. Moody described as the best personal evangelist he ever knew, in his *Natural Law in the Spiritual World* (1883), found evolution and conditional immortality congenial to his evangelical faith. As universalism employed the principle of evolutionary development, so conditional immortality used the principle of "the survival of the fittest" to interpret the future life. The conditions necessary for eternal life are satisfied when there is "a spiritual organism in perfect correspondence with a perfect spiritual environment."<sup>55</sup> To be cut off from this environment by sin is spiritual death.

On the foundation laid by Drummond, James Y. Simpson developed the idea that man is immortable, only potentially immortal, and this immortality is attained in relationship to the immortal and eternal God.<sup>56</sup> Much can be learned even today from these two significant Scotsmen, honest with science and devout in faith, willing to follow truth to the end. In them the scientific and the spiritual were happily wedded.

55 *Natural Law in the Spiritual World* (New York: Pott, 1884), p. 214.

56 *Man and the Attainment of Immortality* (New York: Doran, 1922), pp. 275-301.

Some philosophical formulations of the theory of conditional immortality attempt to avoid annihilationism by describing the state of the transformed relation as a passage from personal to impersonal being. James Martineau thought that "there can be no greater descent than the steps from the personal to the impersonal."<sup>57</sup> O. A. Curtis was unwilling to call this mere "thinghood," but he concludes with a concept that is subjugation by fear rather than submission to love. "There personal rebellion is all gone, and they obey God swiftly; but they obey him not because they eagerly recognize a moral obligation in his command, they obey merely because they are afraid."<sup>58</sup> Benjamin B. Warfield saw in this modification "the point where the theories of annihilation reach up to and melt at last into the doctrine of eternal punishment."<sup>59</sup> It may be added that it also includes the idea of the subordination of "all things" to the Lordship of Christ, the New Testament teaching to which universalism has often made appeal. In summary, it is a state that is "next to nothing" without being nothing.

The acute criticisms based on scriptural exegesis have also led to no little clarification and some modification of the traditional theory of eternal punishment. Do not the Psalms open with the warning:

The wicked are not so, but are like chaff which the wind drives away.

Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,  
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;  
for the Lord knows the way of the righteous,  
but the way of the wicked will perish (1:4-6) ?

Does not the Old Testament close with the prophecy: "For behold, the day comes, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble; the day that comes shall burn them up, says the Lord of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch" (Mal. 4:1) ?

John the Baptist preached: "His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire" (Matt. 3:12). Similar words are on the lips of Jesus in

57 *A Study of Religion* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1888), II, 344.

58 O. A. Curtis, *The Christian Faith* (New York: Methodist Book Concern, 1905), p. 467.

59 *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1949), p. 186.

Matthew 13:30, 41f. The very opposite of life in the teaching of Jesus is destruction. "Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is easy, that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard, that leads to life, and those who find it are few" (7:13).

"Destruction" (*apōleia*) is widely distributed in the New Testament as a description of the destiny of the ungodly. Destruction stands in antithesis to salvation in Philippians 1:28; 3:19. The "vessels of wrath made for destruction" represent the reprobate in contrast to "the vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory" (Rom. 9:22f.). Judas and the man of sin are sons of perdition (*apōleia*) in John 17:12 and II Thessalonians 2:3. The desires for riches "plunge men into ruin and destruction" (I Tim. 6:9). There are two groups of people in Hebrews 10:39: "those who shrink back and are destroyed" and "those who have faith and keep their souls." Destruction is the destiny of all the ungodly and unrighteous (II Pet. 2:3; 3:7,16). The beast ascends from the abyss and goes to *apōleia* (Rev. 17:8,11).

These references are impressive, enough to shatter universalism, but is it clear that they mean ultimate extinction? Oepke's detailed study of the word in Kittel's *Wörterbuch* sees it as the opposite of salvation and eternal life, "an endless, agonizing condition of death" (TWNT, I, 396). This agrees with the picture of *Gehenna* as the place "where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched" (Mark 9:48) and with "eternal punishment" as opposite of "eternal life" (Matt. 25:46).

Exegesis does not move with dogmatic certainty on this difficult and dark question of destiny, but that is no reason why a suggested solution should not be proposed with reservations subject to all the light that careful exegetes can throw. Three apocalyptic passages may be explored. Mark 9:48, with the dreadful picture of *Gehenna* as the place "where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched" is rooted in the Old Testament where the reference is to "the dead bodies" of apostate rebels against God (Isa. 66:24). The saying of Jesus has reference to "the unquenchable fire" used as the very opposite of "life" (Mark 9:43, 45). The opposite of "life" in Matthew 7:13f. is destruction, and the horrible scene in Isaiah 66:24 is also one of utter ruin.

This same contrast between eternal life and eternal punishment is vividly portrayed in a second apocalyptic passage, the parable of the last judgment (Matt. 25:31-46). Debate on this passage has often centered on the meaning of *aiōnios* (eternal). J. M. Shaw, an advocate of conditional immortality, appeals to I Enoch 10 and other apocryphal passages for his claim that the word means "a period of limited duration and not for ever."<sup>60</sup> I Enoch 10:10 uses the word with reference to life, not punishment, and a few lines below, the wicked are "led off to the abyss of fire: the torment and the prison in which they shall be confined for ever" (10:13). A note by R. H. Charles on this chapter of his translation suggests that the word "may denote various periods, according to the context in which it is used," but that elsewhere it means "an unending period." "All the factors must be considered, but detailed study of the word does not sustain the idea of a "period of limited duration."<sup>61</sup>

The more difficult decision pertains to the word *kolasis* (punishment). The term "eternal punishment" is used in *The Testament of Reuben* (5:5), but the meaning there adds nothing to the New Testament. *Kolasis*, used in the New Testament only here and in I John 4:18 ("fear has to do with punishment"), is derived from *kolazo*, the root meaning of which has reference to lopping off or pruning. The verb with the derived meaning of punishment appears twice in the New Testament (Acts 4:21; II Pet. 2:9), but this does not solve the problem so that one can say the punishment is other than being lopped off forever. In Matthew 25:46 it must be interpreted in relation to the departure into the eternal fire (*to pur to aionion*) in 25:41 and the cutting (*dichotomēsei*) in pieces in 24:51, if any unity to the apocalyptic picture is to be retained. Eternal punishment as the deprivation of eternal life may be sustained by the parallelism of punishment and life in Matthew 25:46 and by parallel passages in Matthew 24:51 and 25:41.

The third apocalyptic passage, Revelation 20:9f., is the most difficult of all. It is said that the beast and the false prophet "will be tormented day and night for ever and ever" (20:10). There is evidence that "for ever and ever" (*eis tous aiōnas tōn*

60 Shaw, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

61 The old work by Moses Stuart, *Future Punishment* (Boston: Perkins and Marvin, 1830) is sustained by TWNT, I, 197-209, and in Arndt and Gingrich, *Greek-English Lexicon*, pp. 26-28.

*aiōnōn*, used also of the great harlot in 19:3), means a time of endless duration, since the same phrase is used of the reign of the servants of God in 22:5; but the problem is not so simple as the meaning of torment (*basanisthēsontai*). The verb is used four other times in Revelation (9:5; 11:10; 12:2; 14:10), but no additional light is given beyond the literal meaning of "torture in judicial examination" (Arndt and Gingrich), from *basanos*, a dark touchstone used in testing metals. So literally they are put to the touchstone test with eternal consequences.

It seems clear that this eternal torment has the same meaning as *Gehenna* and *Apōleia*. A suggestion of this is seen in the statement about the beast in Revelation 17:8; 20:10. In the first passage he is said to go into destruction (*eis apōleian*), and this is identified as the place of eternal torment in the second passage.

Outside Revelation the New Testament uses the word in the sense of torment (Mark 5:7; Matt. 8:29; Luke 8:28; Mark 6:48; Matt. 14:24, 8:6; II Pet. 2:8). Some light is thrown on future punishment in Mark 5:7 where the demons plead through the demoniac not to be tormented (*basanisēs*). In Mark 1:24 they fear that Jesus has come to destroy (*apolesai*) them, and this would give some basis for believing that torment and destruction have kindred meaning. In Revelation 20:14 Death and Hades and those therein are thrown into the same lake of fire as that of the beast and false prophet, and there it is defined as "the second death."

Relationship to God is the basis of all human existence, spiritual or ontological, and it is clear that absolute separation from God can only plunge men into the oblivion of non-being. Existential thought has pondered the question as to whether man, who came out of non-being to participation in the being of God, may not so sever his relationship to God that he is plunged again into non-being from which he came. Theistic existentialism sustains the hope of immortality for those who "abide" in the being of God, but man who does not participate in the being of God, according to this view, has no being at all.

It is possible, however, to affirm the doctrine of an endless hell on these same existential terms. One Christian existentialist has said: "Saved existence is being in Christ. Condemned ex-

istence is being outside Christ.”<sup>62</sup> The former is abiding in the *agapē* (love) of God, where all fear of punishment is cast out; the latter is abiding under the *orgē* (wrath) of God, which is darkness forever. On this basis one may still say with Paul Althaus that the eternal punishment is “inescapable godlessness in inescapable relation to God.”<sup>63</sup>

The grim picture of a final *Gehenna* was a problem even in Judaism. Orthodox Judaism was agreed on the state of an endless punishment for the extremely wicked, but both universalism and annihilation were argued as the destiny of those not so wicked. The severe school of Shammai condemned the extremely wicked to endless confinement in *Gehenna*, but the less wicked would be released after a process of punishment and purification. The school of Hillel agreed on the endless punishment for the very wicked, but they taught that the less wicked would be annihilated after twelve months and that ordinary sinners would, by the mercy of God, escape *Gehenna* altogether.<sup>64</sup>

Jesus drew the distinction between “a severe beating” and “a light beating” (Luke 12:47f.; cf. 8:18; 19:26), but there is no clear evidence in the New Testament that either the universalist or the annihilationist conclusion was drawn. The belief in the mercy of God and the desire for a final harmony of all things in God make one hope for such an outcome, but destruction and the second death confront us under the symbol of “the lake of fire” where all the wicked “will be tormented day and night for ever and ever” (Rev. 20:10). *Gehenna* was “prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matt. 25:41), but men may end there by spurning the love of God (Rev. 20:14). Dante was right when he put these words over hell: “Love created me.” It is neither a slow recovery from sickness nor a slow or sudden death. It is, as Oepke concluded, “an endless, agonizing death.”

Current theology inclines more toward universalism than toward conditional immortality as an alternative to the doctrine of eternal hell, but neither theory is able to do full justice to all the biblical teaching. It is a problem that still requires

62 Heinrich Ott, *Eschatologie* (Zollikon: Evangelischer Verlag, 1958), p. 74.

63 Althaus, *op. cit.*, p. 190.

64 Paul Volz, *Die Eschatologie der jüdischen Gemeinde* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, n.d.), p. 326.

careful consideration, free from the hurling of unreasonable epithets, before more certain conclusions can be drawn.<sup>65</sup>

65 A symposium with representative statements on all three views may be found in *The Unknown Country* (Springfield, Mass.: C. A. Nichols, 1889). Most of the patristic sources have been examined by Joe Belcastro, "A Critical Examination of the Doctrine of Eternal Hell," unpublished dissertation, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1942. Modern sources are examined by John R. Claypool, "The Problem of Hell in Contemporary Theology," unpublished dissertation in Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1959. Both Belcastro and Claypool come to the major conclusions of conditional immortality.

## Part II

# The Hope of History

## *Chapter Five*

### **The Kingdom**

THE HOPE OF MAN is inseparable from the hope of history, yet the traditional eschatology of both Catholicism and Protestantism has been preoccupied with death and life after death. The *parousia*, the judgment, and the consummation have been brought along mostly as extra luggage. Historical eschatology has come to fullest expression in the movement known as *Heilsgeschichte* (salvation history), a word coined by J. A. Bengel (1687-1752) and made famous by his followers.<sup>1</sup> This was a radical revision of the mechanical dispensationalism of Campegius Vitringa and Johannes Coccejus.

One wing of *Heilsgeschichte* became dispensationalism under the guiding genius of J. N. Darby and his disciple C. I. Scofield, whose *Scofield Reference Bible* has been one of the major religious influences in popular theology of the twentieth century.<sup>2</sup> Two distinctive features of this eschatological system, already alluded to in Chapter I, are the belief that God's plan for human history is divided into seven dispensations, and the hope that believers will be taken out of the world by a "Rapture" and thus will be spared the "Great Tribulation" that is to come upon the earth. These two presuppositions have been cogently challenged on both historical and exegetical grounds, but the belief in a holy history that is to be brought to a consummation in the future remains a matter for serious discussion.<sup>3</sup>

Another wing was developed in German theology. It was

1 Otto A. Piper, "Heilsgeschichte," in *A Handbook of Christian Theology*, ed. Marvin Halverson and Arthur A. Cohen (New York: Meridian, 1958), pp. 156-159; Karl Gerhard Steck, *Die Idee der Heilsgeschichte* (Zollikon: Evangelischer Verlag, 1959).

2 Clarence B. Bass, *Backgrounds to Dispensationalism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1960).

3 George E. Ladd, *The Blessed Hope* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956).

free from mechanical dispensationalism, but at times was conditioned by trends in German philosophy. J. T. Beck gave an organic interpretation of history that assigned significance to every part, but he tended to identify the purpose of God with the progressive unfolding of history after the fashion of Hegel's philosophy. This hybrid concept appears in Baptist theology in E. Y. Mullins' much used phrase "progressive revelation."<sup>4</sup> J. C. K. von Hofmann used the *Heilsgeschichte* concept to restore and preserve the rightful place of the Old Testament, arguing that the New Testament could not be understood in isolation from the Old Testament. The contribution of Oscar Cullmann is one consequence of this movement.

An orthodox work like Paul Althaus' *Die letzten Dinge* (*The Last Things*) attempts to eliminate the idea of an interim history along with the intermediate state of personal eschatology. With great zeal he labors to leave historical eschatology hanging on the two pillars of the first and second coming of Christ with no bridge between. He wages total war on the thought of an *Endgeschichte*, a series of events at the end of history. There is only an end of history, not an end-history.<sup>5</sup> The following pages will resist his challenge and follow more generally the historical eschatology of *Heilsgeschichte*.

#### THE IMMEDIACY OF THE KINGDOM

*The Theocratic Kingship.* The roots of historical eschatology reach back to the belief in the kingship of God. At the very heart of Hebrew history, in the greatest of the Hebrew prophets, the shout is heard: "My eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!" (Isa. 6:5). Even though the designation of deity as king is a characteristic of the ancient East (*Moloch*, *Melkart*, *Milcom*, *Chemoshmelek*), Gerhard von Rad not only concludes that "this divine epithet is probably of semitic origin," but: "It provides the best description of the relationship between God and man: God is Lord, He demands obedience, but in return gives protection and help."<sup>6</sup>

The earliest references make the reign of the Lord abundantly

<sup>4</sup> *The Christian Religion in Its Doctrinal Expression* (Philadelphia: Judson, 1917), pp. 148f.

<sup>5</sup> Paul Althaus, *Die letzten Dinge* (Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1949), pp. 256-318

<sup>6</sup> *Basileia*, tr. H. P. Kingdon (London: A. & C. Black, 1957), p. 9. The following discussion owes much to this valuable study.

clear. "The Lord their God is with them, and the shout of a king is among them" (Num. 23:21).

Thus the Lord became king of Jeshurun,  
when the heads of the people were gathered,  
all the tribes of Israel together (Deut. 33:5).

Micaiah, the first of the classical prophets, declares in a vision: "I saw the Lord sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing beside him on his right hand and on the left" (I Kings 22:19). This view of the kingship of God has been rightly described as the immediacy of the kingdom.<sup>7</sup>

The reign of the Lord is a twofold concept in the Old Testament. The so-called Coronation Psalms (47, 93, 96, 97, 99) sing of the present reign of the Lord, and this absence of a future eschatology has at times been looked upon as a type of "realized eschatology" that proclaims no more than an eternal fact: "The Lord reigns." This is a fact in liturgical experience, but there always remains the hope that His eternal sovereignty, now hidden, will be made known in a glorious manifestation. That majestic Song of Moses links the present and future with the proclamation: "The Lord will reign for ever and ever" (Exod. 15:18). And again in Psalm 146:10 it is promised: "The Lord will reign for ever, thy God, O Zion, to all generations."

This eschatological expectation of a future consummation breaks forth in apocalyptic wonder in the Apocalypse of Isaiah (24-27). Isaiah 24:23 anticipates:

Then the moon will be confounded, and the sun ashamed;  
for the Lord of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem  
and before his elders he will manifest his glory.

At other places in Isaiah this hope is alive. Isaiah 33:22 proclaims:

The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our ruler,  
the Lord is our king; he will save us.

And Zephaniah 3:15 has the promise:

The Lord has taken away the judgments against you,  
he has cast out your enemies.  
The King of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst;  
you shall fear evil no more.

According to Obadiah 21 the day of the Lord will be a time when:

<sup>7</sup> Gabriel Vahanian, *The Death of God* (New York: Braziller, 1961), pp. 20-28.

Saviors shall go up to Mount Zion to rule Mount Esau;  
and the kingdom shall be the Lord's.

The hope for the universal reign of the Lord never dies, and the oracle in Zechariah 12:14 holds out the promise: "Then every one that survives of all the nations that have come against Jeruaslem shall go up year after year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feasts of booths. And if any of the families of the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, there will be no rain upon them" (Zech. 14:16f.). This tension between the present reality of God's sovereignty and the future hope of His majestic manifestation is the essence of historical eschatology.

The reign of the Lord is universal as well as eternal. His sovereignty includes not only the present and the future but also Israel and the world. It is true that some of the earliest passages such as Numbers 23:21; Jeremiah 8:1; Zephaniah 3:15; Micah 2:12f.; and 4:6ff. are silent on the universal scope of the Lord's reign, but later writings include all the peoples of the earth (Zech. 14:9, 16f.; Mal. 1:14; Ps. 22:29; 47:3, 8). Jeremiah 10:7, 10 has a majestic picture of this universal reign:

Who would not fear thee, O King of the nations?  
For this is thy due;  
for among all the wise ones of the nations  
and in all their kingdoms there is none like thee.  
But the Lord is the true God;  
he is the living God and the everlasting King.  
At his wrath the earth quakes,  
and the nations cannot endure his indignation.

One cannot speak of a theocratic King if He has no theocratic kingdom. If He reigns, He has a realm; if He is a *melek* (king), he has a *malkuth* (kingdom). Even though *malkuth* usually has a political meaning, as in I Samuel 20:31 and I Kings 2:12, there are a few references to God's *malkuth*. Psalm 103:19 says:

The Lord has established his throne in the heavens,  
and his kingdom rules over all.

And Psalm 145:11-13 has the promise:

They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom,  
and tell of thy power,  
to make known to the sons of men thy mighty deeds,  
and the glorious splendor of thy kingdom.  
Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,  
and thy dominion endures throughout all generations.

Most that is said about a theocratic kingdom is intertwined with either the idea of a representative or of a redeemer king, and this needs to be considered.

*The Representative Kingship.* Representative Kingship arose during the conflict between Israel and the Philistines. In the time of theocratic kingship charismatic leaders were the agents of the Lord in Israel. Resistance to representative kingship was especially vigorous, as the famous parable of Jotham in Judges 9 so powerfully attests. Gideon's successful exploits against the Midianites had put him in position to be king in Israel, but he refused, saying to the people: "The Lord will rule over you" (Judg. 8:23). Afterward it was quite different with Abimelech, who made a bid to establish a hereditary monarchy in Israel. Jotham's parable is filled with prophetic irony as he tells how the trees offered the kingship to the olive tree, the fig tree, and the vine, all in succession, but each refused because he had something more important to do. Only the bramble was willing to be king!

The same prophetic protest against representative kingship is found in I Samuel 8:1-22; 10:17-27a; and 12:1-25. This later account of the institution of monarchy reflects the prophetic criticism of a degenerate monarchy that well-nigh displaced the Lord in the life of Israel. God's permissive will instructs a reluctant Samuel: "Hearken to the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them" (I Sam. 8:7).

The priestly history reconciles much of this tension by representing David's descendants as the rightful rulers in the Lord's kingdom. This is more closely associated with the older and more favorable account of the institution of monarchy in I Samuel 9:10-16. This builds on the Davidic Covenant of II Samuel 7:12-22 as understood by the priestly chronicler. The priestly point of view portrays David as ruling over the Lord's kingdom (I Chron. 17:14); Solomon sits on the throne in the Lord's kingdom (I Chron. 28:5). The Davidic kingdom is the Lord's kingdom, and the descendants of David sit on the throne of the Lord (I Chron. 29:23; II Chron. 9:8). Indeed, "the kingdom of the Lord" was "in the hand of the sons of David" (II Chron. 13:8). Israel was God's "kingdom enterprise!"

The apocalyptic view of kingship stressed the idea that the kingdom is the gift of God and belongs to a coming age. After

the four world kingdoms “the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall its sovereignty be left to another people” (Dan. 2:44). The “son of man” appears before the Ancient of Days:

And to him was given dominion and glory and kingdom,  
that all peoples, nations and languages should serve him;  
his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass  
away,

and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

And the kingdom and the dominion

and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven  
shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High;  
their kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom,  
and all dominions shall serve and obey them (Dan. 7:14,27).

Much debate goes on as to whether the “son of man” can be identified with “the saints of the Most High,” but it is clear that God gives the kingdom in an age after the kingdoms of men have passed away.

*The Redemptive Kingship.* Redemptive kingship prepared the way for the belief in an apocalyptic kingdom that has no end, but here again the distinction between the present and the future must be emphasized. The Royal King of the present and the Redeemer King of the future are not to be identified, although the majesty of the court was a bridge to the messianic faith. Von Rad has well said: “The whole complex of religious-political concepts bound up with the actual king, what was expected of him, how he was addressed, the miracles attributed to him, all that became to a high degree the nursery of the messianic hope.”<sup>8</sup> With the possible exception of Psalm 45:7, the so-called Royal Psalms (2, 20, 21, 45, 72, 101, 110, 132) represent the king as fully human and, unlike much of the surrounding culture, avoid the idea of deification.<sup>9</sup>

The rule of the Redeemer King was associated with the house of Judah as early as the prophecy in Genesis 49:8-12. Genesis 49:10 promised:

The scepter shall not depart from Judah,  
nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,  
until he comes to whom it belongs;  
and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.

8 Von Rad, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

9 Werner Schmidt, *Königtum Gottes in Ugarit und Israel* (Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1961).

The promise of restoration in Amos 9:11-15 includes words derived from the court ideology of the house of David and the Davidic Covenant of I Samuel 7. Amos 9:11 hopes that:

In that day I will raise up  
the booth of David that is fallen  
and repair its breaches,  
and raise up its ruins,  
and rebuild it as in the days of old.

Micah 5:2 looks forward to a Redeemer King from the house of David who would have pretemporal associations. The house of David was promised:

But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,  
who are little to be among the clans of Judah,  
from you shall come forth for me  
one who is to be ruler in Israel,  
Whose origin is from of old,  
from ancient days.

The royal ideology applied to the Redeemer King at times employed typology, as in the cycle of oracles in Isaiah 7:10-17; 9:2-7; 11:1-9. The Immanuel at the time of Isaiah, perhaps Isaiah's son *Maher-shalal-hashbaz* (8:1-4), becomes a sign not only to Ahaz for the immediate future, but there may be some evidence for a messianic interpretation also.<sup>10</sup> The Redeemer King of Isaiah 9:2-7 is to overthrow the oppressor and to occupy the throne of David. The oracle was perhaps first composed to celebrate the accession of a Judean king, but he has become a type of a messianic person described as a child king (vv. 6f.):

For to us a child is born,  
to us a son is given;  
and the government will be upon his shoulder,  
and his name will be called  
'Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.'  
Of the increase of his government and of peace  
there will be no end,  
upon the throne of David, and over his kingdom,

<sup>10</sup> See my articles for details, *Review and Expositor*, LI (Oct. 1954), 495-507; LII (Jan. 1955), 44-45; LII (July 1955), 310-324. Also N. K. Gottwald, "Immanuel as the Prophet's Son," *Vetus Testamentum*, VIII. II (Jan. 1958), 36-47; Wilhelm Vischer, *Die Immanuel im Rahmen des königlichen Zionfestes* (Zürich: Evangelischer Verlag, 1955).

to establish it, and to uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness  
from this time forth and for evermore.  
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

The description of the Redeemer King in Isaiah 11:1-9 may have been composed for the occasion when Hezekiah was anointed, but the glorious reign expected could be fulfilled only in a messianic age.

Other figures of a Redeemer King are found in the later prophets. Jeremiah hoped for a Branch who would "reign as a king and deal wisely" (23:5), and Ezekiel expected a sprig from the top of the cedar tree who would be planted on a high mountain (17:22-24) and would watch over his people like a shepherd watches his sheep (34:23f.; 37:24f.). In Isaiah 45:1ff. Cyrus the Persian is pictured in the role of a Redeemer King, and Zechariah 6:9ff. portrays Zerubbabel as king of the last age.

In summary, it may be said that the kingdom is God's eternal sovereignty over His people and the world, hidden now and partially realized in those who patiently wait for its full realization and glorious manifestation.<sup>11</sup>

#### THE IMMINENCE OF THE KINGDOM

*The Gospel of the Kingdom.* The imminence of the kingdom is first indicated by the gospel (*euaggelion*). By reference to the messenger (*aggelos*) of Malachi 3:1 and the voice of Isaiah 40:3, the Gospel of Mark dates the "beginning of the gospel of Jesus" (1:1) at the time when "John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins" (v. 4). "Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel'" (vv. 14f.). But what is "the gospel" (*euaggelion*), and what is meant by saying "the kingdom of God is at hand" (*eggiken*)? The shift of the ages into eschatological time was taking place: "the time is fulfilled" (v. 15).

Mark's Gospel uses only the noun (*euaggelion*) — twice

11 Rudolf Schnackenberg, a distinguished Roman Catholic scholar, has reached a similar conclusion in *Gottes Herrschaft und Reich* (Freiburg: Herder, 1959), pp. 1-22.

in the opening narrative, where it means "gospel of Jesus Christ" (1:1) and "gospel of God" (1:14), and on five other occasions, all in the words of Jesus (1:15; 8:35; 10:29; 13:10; 14:9). Matthew's Gospel speaks more definitely of "the gospel of the kingdom" (4:23; 9:35; 24:14) and of "this gospel" (26:13). Luke's Gospel, in contrast to Mark's, uses only the verb, twice with the passive meaning (7:22; 16:16) and eight times with the active (1:19; 2:10; 3:18; 4:18, 43; 8:1; 9:6; 20:1).<sup>12</sup>

On the basis of the Greek and in comparison with the Aramaic, Gustav Dalman attempted to demonstrate that Jesus could not have used the term *euaggelion*, and many other scholars have followed his conclusion; but more detailed contemporary study, especially since the work of Julius Schniewind, has restored the belief that the term may be traced through Jesus to certain passages in the book of Isaiah.<sup>13</sup> Jesus preached a gospel, good news, about the coming kingdom of God, not a gospel primarily about himself. John Wick Bowman, building on the work of Gerhard Friedrich and Julius Schniewind in Kittel's *Wörterbuch*, has well said that five passages in Mark "appear to reflect an early period when the gospel was still something that Jesus heralded rather than something that he was himself."<sup>14</sup>

It seems firmly established that the clue in Mark is the right one and that passages such as Isaiah 40:9; 41:27; 52:7; 61:1 form the foundation for understanding the proclamations of John, Jesus, and the disciples. In Isaiah 40:9 a voice cries:

Get you up to a high mountain,  
O Zion, herald of good tidings (*mebhassereth*);  
lift up your voice with strength,  
O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings (*mebhassereth*)  
lift it up, fear not  
say to the cities of Judah,  
'Behold your God.'

Isaiah 41:27 responds:

12 Millar Burrows, "The Origin of the Term 'Gospel,'" *Journal of Biblical Literature*, XLIV (1925), 21-33.

13 David Bosch, *Die Heidenmission in der Zukunftschaus Jesu* (Zürich: Zwingli Verlag, 1959), pp. 51-60.

14 *Prophetic Realism and the Gospel* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1955), p. 67.

I first have declared it to Zion,  
and I give to Jerusalem a herald  
of good tidings (*mebhasser*).

Even more striking is Isaiah 52:7, which announces:

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him  
who brings good tidings (*mebhasser*),  
who publishes peace (*mashmia*),  
who brings good tidings of good (*mebhasser*),  
who publishes salvation (*mashmia*),  
who says to Zion, 'Your God reigns.'

As the exiles return to Zion the messengers announce the deliverance of Jerusalem and the dawn of peace and salvation. The deliverance had not yet taken place, but the good news (*mebhasser*) of the coming event made joyful the people of God. This was the good news which John revived and Jesus came to fulfill.

Isaiah 61:1f. is of special importance for understanding the gospel of the kingdom, for Luke 4:18f. says that Jesus read the passage in the synagogue at Nazareth:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives  
and recovering of sight to the blind,  
to set at liberty those who are oppressed,  
to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

It is plausible to regard the Nazareth episode as the clue to Luke's Gospel, for most of the themes found in Luke (and Acts also) are suggested by this passage and the address that follows.<sup>15</sup> The good news for which they had long listened had arrived: "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (4:21). "The Kingdom of God is at hand."

The eschatological debate over the meaning of *ēggiken* (is at hand) is a sort of theological holy war. C. H. Dodd fired the shot that set things off with his translation of Mark 1:15 as: "The Kingdom of God has come." On the basis of the LXX translation of the Hebrew *naga'* and the Aramaic *m'ta* with the Greek *eggizein*, Dodd concluded that the Greek must have the same meaning: "to reach" or "to arrive." This he thought was strengthened by the fact that the same words were translated

15 This has been developed by Emanuel Dahunsi, "The Significance of the Account of the Nazareth Episode in the Gospel of Luke," unpublished dissertation, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1957.

by the verb *phthanein*, which means "to anticipate" or "to arrive."<sup>16</sup> *The New English Bible* (1961), under Dodd's leadership, has so adopted this view that *ēggiken* appears in Mark 1:15 as "is upon you," and *ephthasen* is translated in Luke 11:20 as "has already come upon you."

A check on all the passages that translate *ēggiken* in *The New English Bible* gives the following result:

- "... the kingdom of God is upon you" (Mark 1:15).
- "... the kingdom of Heaven is upon you" (Matt. 3:2; 4:17; 10:7).
- "... the kingdom of God has come close (to you)" (Luke 10:9, 11).
- "My betrayer is upon us" (Mark 14:42; Matt. 26:46).
- "The hour has come!" (Matt. 26:45).
- "The Day is upon us" (Luke 21:8).
- "It is far on in the night; day is near" (Rom. 13:12).
- "... for the coming of the Lord is near" (Jas. 5:8).
- "The end of all things is upon us" (I Pet. 4:7).

All of the first six passages have reference to the kingdom of God (heaven), yet four times the translation is "upon you" and twice "come close." The AV has "at hand" for the first four and "come nigh" in the last two. The ASV is identical with the AV, and the RSV has only changed "nigh" to "near." C. H. Dodd and his committee have set themselves against these translations in the effort to conform to Dodd's conclusions. Reginald H. Fuller, however, insists that the word means "is at hand" or "is near."<sup>17</sup> Which conclusion is best sustained by the context of the seven passages that do not speak directly of the kingdom of God?

In Mark 14:43 (cf. Matt. 26:47) "Judas came" (Mark, *paraginetai*; Matthew, *ēlthen*) "immediately, while he was still speaking," but he was only close enough that they could "see" him approaching. A few minutes before Jesus had said: "The hour has come!" (Matthew, *ēggiken*; Mark, *ēlthen*), but the meaning here would rest primarily on whether the hour has reference to arrest or to death. W. G. Kümmel argues for the hour of death and thinks the statement should be translated "the hour has come near."<sup>18</sup> It is surely inconsistent to translate

16 *The Parables of the Kingdom* (London: Nisbet, 1955), pp. 43f.

17 *The Mission and Achievement of Jesus* (London: SCM, 1954), pp. 20-25.

18 *Promise and Fulfilment* (Naperville, Ill.: Alec R. Allenson, 1957), p. 23.

Luke 21:8 with "the Day is upon us," and follow in the same chapter with "her destruction is near" (Luke 21:20). It would of course be absurd to say that Jerusalem would be destroyed at the moment she would be surrounded with armies, for she was encompassed several months before the destruction, but the false prophets are only a sign that the end is near. No sign would be required if the end were here.

Outside the Gospels the results are much the same. If it is "far on in the night," it is plain that the day can only be near, not here. Reginald H. Fuller has rightly pointed out that this "is obviously a case of synonymous parallelism."<sup>19</sup> With this *The New English Bible* apparently agrees. It is also clear that the *parousia* is only near, not here, in James 5:8; otherwise, there would be little need to be "patient and stout-hearted." *The New English Bible* sees this too, but I Peter 4:7, which has reference to the end, returns to "upon us." It is possible to identify the persecution with the end, but it is not likely that the writer means more than the imminence of the end. Reginald H. Fuller has again well said: "If the End had already come, the time for ethical exhortation would be past!"<sup>20</sup> When these examples of the perfect tense are compared with other tenses of the verb in Greek literature it seems that the case of C. H. Dodd is far too weak to establish the inconsistencies of *The New English Bible*. The translations of the AV, ASV, and RSV are far more convincing.

The most vivid evidence for the imminence of the kingdom is found in the signs wrought by Jesus. The heart of this historical evidence is found in Jesus' reply to the messengers of John the Baptist. John had asked: "Are you he who is to come, or shall we look for another?" (Matt. 11:3); and Jesus told the disciples of John: "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them" (Matthew 11:4f.). The reply is not only a conflation of ideas found in Isaiah 35:5f. and 61:1, but the "see and hear" motif is the clue for understanding Jesus' proclamation of the kingdom.

Jesus' eulogy of John (Luke 7:24-35; Matt. 11:7-11, 16-19)

19 Fuller, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

20 *Ibid.*

has a saying that indicates that John the Baptist was not yet in the kingdom (Luke 7:28; Matt. 11:11). If the kingdom is looked upon as present in Jesus and His disciples but not in John, a peculiar picture is presented, but if it is viewed as the greatness of the coming kingdom for both Jesus and John a more consistent meaning appears. T. W. Manson may be right in seeing John as the Moses of the new movement that never entered the Promised Land of a new order initiated by Jesus, but a future view of the kingdom is more in harmony with the context.<sup>21</sup>

The motif of hearing appears again in Jesus' response to the request for signs (Matt. 12:38-42; Luke 11:29-32). "Realized eschatology" has used this passage in the attempt to justify the claim that the kingdom is here already.

The men of Nineveh will arise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the South will arise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon and behold, something greater than Solomon is here (Matt. 12:41f.).

C. H. Dodd was right in pointing out that *Pleion* is neuter and should be translated "something," but he is not convincing when he claims that this "something" is the kingdom.<sup>22</sup> The analogy of "the preaching of Jonah" and "the wisdom of Solomon" with "the preaching of Jesus" gives more grounds for identifying the "something" with the *kerygma* about the coming kingdom than with the kingdom itself.

Both the seeing and the hearing appear again in the words of blessedness pronounced on the disciples (Matt. 13:16f.; Luke 10:23f.):

But blessed are your eyes, for they see,  
and your ears, for they hear.

Truly, I say to you, many prophets and  
righteous men longed to see what you see,  
and did not see it, and to hear what you  
hear, and did not hear it (Matt. 13:16f.).

What was it that they saw if not the signs of the coming kingdom? What did they hear if not the gospel of the coming

21 *The Sayings of Jesus* (London: SCM, 1949), p. 70.

22 Dodd, *op. cit.*, pp. 46f.

kingdom? D. S. Cairns thought that the Gospel miracles were manifestations of the kingdom, but he was careful to qualify this by saying also that "they are anticipations and proleptic manifestations of the Kingdom in its perfection when the reign of sin and death shall have been finally broken" and that they are "manifestations of the heavenly life, fragments of heaven in the life of time."<sup>23</sup> Here as often Cairns was ahead of his times, for not even Alan Richardson's important study has put the point so clearly. Richardson puts the emphasis on the present manifestation, not upon the proleptic manifestation.<sup>24</sup> Reginald H. Fuller has asserted that Richardson is inconsistent in saying that the kingdom is "drawing nigh," while at the same time agreeing with Dodd that it has "already arrived."<sup>25</sup> This, however, as will be pointed out, may be due to the peculiar nature of the evidence.

*The Signs of the Kingdom.* The signs of the kingdom reach back to the prophetic expectation in Isaiah 35:5f. Zion's future was coming and:

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,  
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;  
then shall the lame man leap like a hart,  
and the tongue of the dumb sing for joy.

The miracles of Jesus were signs of this coming age of messianic salvation. Martin Dibelius rightly summarizes the meaning of these signs when he says: "The powers of the kingdom are already present, yet not as a force that changes the world but as the strength that radiates from One, the only One, who is familiar with it and mediates it. What He makes men see in the form of healing or of encouragement, of criticism and of promise, is not the Kingdom but the *signs* of this Kingdom."<sup>26</sup>

The miracles of Jesus were not used as proof of his Messiahship but as proclamation of the coming messianic kingdom in which the whole created order will participate. The demonology of Mark's Gospel depicts this preliminary eschatological struggle between Jesus and Beelzebul.<sup>27</sup> Beelzebul and the demons un-

23 *The Faith that Rebels* (London: SCM, 1928), p. 67.

24 *The Miracle-Stories of the Gospels* (London: SCM, 1941), pp. 38-58.

25 Fuller, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

26 *Jesus*, tr. Charles B. Hedrick and Frederick C. Grant (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1949), p. 88.

27 James M. Robinson, *The Problem of History in Mark* (Naperville, Ill.: Alec R. Allenson, 1957), pp. 33-42.

der his rule dominate this present evil age, but the powers of a coming age have broken into the satanic system as a sign that these proleptic powers will ultimately triumph. "But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man; then indeed he may plunder his house" (Mark 3:27). Satan is the strong man who occupies the house of the present age, and Jesus has entered his house to bind him first, that men may then plunder his house to set the captives free.

Signs as a proof of Messiahship are looked upon as a temptation. The Pharisees demanded of Jesus the type of evidence asked by Satan in the temptation, but He refused to give proof of His own person by saying: "Why does this generation seek a sign? Truly, I say to you, no sign shall be given this generation" (Mark 8:12f.). With the proper distinction made between miracles as a part of the proclamation of the coming kingdom of God and miracles as a proof of the Messiahship of Jesus, the significance of the sign may be assessed.

The typology of Matthew's Gospel elaborates miracles as signs of the kingdom. According to the tradition in the *Mishnah* the miracles of Moses were wonders: "Ten wonders were wrought for our fathers in Egypt and ten at the sea . . . . Ten wonders were wrought for our fathers in the temple" (*Aboth* 5:4f.). Matthew's Gospel reflects this typological pattern by presenting ten miracles of Jesus in Matthew 8 and 9. The miracles themselves were signs of the coming exodus, not the exodus itself, even as the miracles of Jesus were signs of a coming kingdom, not the kingdom itself. Moses wrought his signs by "the finger of God" (Exod. 8:19), and it was by the finger of God that Jesus cast out the demons (Luke 11:20). The portrait of Jesus as the new Moses helps considerably our understanding of how the early Church related the miracles to the coming kingdom which would transform the created order.<sup>28</sup>

The eschatology of Luke's Gospel fills with meaning the interim between the miraculous signs and the future kingdom. Hans Conzelmann's important book on *The Center of Time* (*Die Mitte der Zeit*)<sup>29</sup> inserts three periods into salvation history

28 Hans Joachim Schoeps, *Theologie und Geschichte des Judenchristentums* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1949), p. 93; I.B., VII, 336-360.

29 English trans. by Geoffrey Buswell, *The Theology of St. Luke* (New York: Harper, 1960).

(*Heilsgeschichte*), thus blazing new trails through the bewildering eschatology of Luke-Acts. The first period, which concludes with John the Baptist, is that of Israel: "The law and the prophets were until John; since then the good news of the kingdom of God is preached, and everyone enters it violently" (Luke 16:16).

The second period is the ministry of Jesus, a ministry free from the activity of Satan from the time "when the devil had ended every temptation" in the wilderness until his return at "an opportune time" to enter into Judas Iscariot (Luke 4:13; 22:3). During this period Jesus so works "in the power of the Spirit" (Luke 4:14) that it may be said that by His exorcisms the kingdom of God had already come (11:20). In His person as well as in His work the kingdom of God was already "in the midst" of the Pharisees even if they were too blind to see it (17:21). Even the relatives of Jesus, along with Herod, wanted to "see" His works but did not (8:20; 9:9).

This third period is that of the Church, filled with the Spirit to fulfill her mission but pressed on every side by the opposition of the world (*ecclesia pressa*). With power and patience (*hypomonē*) she awaits the delayed *parousia* and looks for the appearance of the kingdom in glory. In the interim Jesus has gone into "a far country to receive a kingdom and then return" (19:12) and "Jerusalem will be trodden down by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled" (21:24). The disciples will not eat the Passover with Him again "until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God," He will not drink with them again "the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes" (22:16,18). The powers at work in Jesus do not remove the future hope of "looking for the kingdom of God" (23:51). The ministry of Jesus was a foretaste of the future kingdom which is yet to come in glory. It was only *after* his earthly ministry that Jesus was to "enter into his glory" and come into His kingdom (24:26; 23:42).<sup>30</sup>

The Christology of John's Gospel is dominated by the signs and sayings related to the glory of God. Men must here and now be "born from above" if they expect to "see the kingdom of God" and "to enter the kingdom of God" when it comes (John 3:3,5). The kingdom of Christ does not belong to this world (*kosmos*) (John 18:36), yet glimpses of His glory are seen in

30 J. R. H. Moorman, *The Path to Glory* (London: S.P.C.K., 1961).

all His miraculous signs. This may well be designated the theme of John:

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father (1:14).

The signs of His glory are seven in John's Gospel: the turning of water into wine (2:1-11), the healing of the nobleman's son (4:46-54); the healing of the impotent man (5:2-9), the feeding of the five thousand (6:4-13), the walking on the sea (6:16-21), the healing of the man born blind (9:1-7), and the raising of Lazarus (11:1-44). These are signs (*sēmeia*), not wonders (*terata*) that would prove His claims to His opponents. Only once does he refer to miracles as wonders, and that in a derogatory sense (4:48). Some did believe because of the signs (3:2; 7:31; 9:16), but this is not the main purpose.

The main purpose of the signs is to manifest His glory (2:11), but the glimpses of glory did not abide in blinding splendor. The hour had "not yet come" (2:4). These "my hour" sayings in John are also seven (2:4; 7:30; 8:20; 12:23, 27; 13:1; 17:1).<sup>31</sup> It was not until He entered into Jerusalem that it could be said: "The hour has come for the Son of man to be glorified" (12:23), and this hour would be the judgment (*krisis*) of this world (12:31). At the Passover "Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of the world to the Father" (13:1), and His high-priestly prayer voiced the purpose for which He came into the world: "Father, the hour has come; glorify thy Son that the Son may glorify thee, since thou hast given power over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom thou hast given him" (17:1f.). Only after this "hour" can the Spirit be given to the disciples that they may go on their mission in the world (7:39; 20:22f.).

#### THE INHERITANCE OF THE KINGDOM

*The Powers of the Kingdom.* The relationship between the imminence of the kingdom and the inheritance of the kingdom requires a balance between the spiritual presence of Christ here and now and the glorious *parousia* hereafter. This falls within the framework of the two ages, "the present evil age"

<sup>31</sup> These have been expounded by Harold Lee Moore, "The 'My Hour' Sayings in the Fourth Gospel," unpublished thesis in Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1951.

(Gal. 1:4), dominated by the demonic powers of Satan, and “the age to come” (Matt. 12:32; Mark 10:30). According to the typology of the exodus, the interim between the *passion* and the *parousia*, between Egypt and Canaan, is the wilderness wandering, and upon those who live in this period “the ends of the ages are come” (I Cor. 10:11, ASV). Satan is “the god of this world” (II Cor. 4:4), but one of the elements in present Christian experience is the taste of “the powers of the age to come” (Heb. 6:5). In a much used phrase, “the powers of the age to come” are “proleptically present” even in this evil age. God not only gives bread from heaven and water from the rock, but, as Isaac Watts’ familiar lines put it:

The hill of Zion yields  
A thousand sacred sweets  
Before we reach the heavenly fields  
Or walk the golden streets.

Seven texts have been the basis of much debate on this relationship. The first is Mark 9:1: “Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power.” Only a few extremists would claim that the early disciples put the words into the mouth of Jesus.<sup>32</sup> It is generally argued that there is no cause for the Church’s attributing these words to Jesus. The interpretations range all the way from Albert Schweitzer’s consequent eschatology to C. H. Dodd’s realized eschatology. The school of Schweitzer has grouped this passage with Matthew 10:23, Mark 13:30, 14:62 as examples of the unfulfilled expectation of the *parousia* in that generation. At the opposite pole is the school of C. H. Dodd, which understands the seeing (*idōsin*, they see) as spiritual perception and the coming (*elēthuian*) as meaning “that some of those who heard Jesus speak would before their death awake to the fact that the kingdom of God had come.”<sup>33</sup>

Other interpreters have identified the “power” (*en dunamei*) of the kingdom with the transfiguration (II Pet. 1:16, *dunamin kai parousian*), the resurrection of Jesus when He was “designated Son of God in power according to the spirit of holiness

<sup>32</sup> Rudolf Bultmann, *Die Geschichte der Synoptischen Tradition*, 3. Auflage (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1957), p. 128; Erich Grässer, *Das Problem der Parusieverzögerung in den synoptischen Evangelien und in der Apostelgeschichte* (Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1957), pp. 131-137.

<sup>33</sup> Dodd, *op. cit.*, pp. 53f.

(Rom. 1:4, *en dunamei*), “sitting at the right hand of power” in the exaltation (Mark 14:62, *tēs dunameōs*), the “power from on high” at Pentecost (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8, *dunamin*), and “the Son of man coming in clouds with great power and glory” (Mark 13:26, *meta dunameōs*). R. C. H. Lenski, without another “power” proof text,<sup>34</sup> has added the destruction of Jerusalem, and Theodor Zahn interprets the fulfillment to be a combination of all these events.<sup>35</sup>

The polarity of this passage is evident even in the Gospels. Matthew 16:28 follows an apocalyptic understanding and identifies the coming of the kingdom in power with “the Son of man coming in his kingdom.” Luke 9:27 is more spiritual and speaks only of seeing “the kingdom of God.” J. E. Fison attempts to hold this polarity in balance by an eloquent *via media*:

If, however, we want to know what our Lord meant by his enigmatical statement, then we can see St. Matthew and St. Luke each pointing, like the two sides of a cloudcapped mountain, to a hidden reality of love, which is as much future and apocalyptic as St. Matthew asserts and as much present and mystical as St. Luke realizes.<sup>36</sup>

This is all very true, but does it get back to what the saying meant when it was spoken?

The interpretation that seems most plausible is that found in II Peter 1:16-18 and accepted by most of the church fathers. They of course assumed that Jesus actually spoke the words and that the Gospels had them in context so that the fulfillment in the transfiguration a few days later is most logical.<sup>37</sup> Jesus took “some” (*tines*, Mark 9:1f., viz. Peter, James, and John) to the high mountain and “was transfigured (*metemorphoθē*, v. 2) before them.” Moses and Elijah appeared (*ōphthē*, v. 4), but “as they were coming down the mountain, he charged them to tell no one what they had seen (*eidon*, v. 9), until the Son of Man should have risen from the dead.” Even on the

<sup>34</sup> *The Interpretation of St. Mark's Gospel* (Columbus, Ohio: Wartburg, 1946), p. 357. Also Norval Geldenhuys, *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1951), p. 277.

<sup>35</sup> *Das Evangelium des Lukas* (Leipzig: A. Deichert, 1913), pp. 381-383.

<sup>36</sup> *The Christian Hope* (London: Longmans, Green, 1954), p. 189.

<sup>37</sup> The historical details and spiritual meaning of the transfiguration are kept in balance by Heinrich Baltensweiler, *Die Verklärung Jesu* (Zürich: Zwingli Verlag, 1959).

mount, after Moses and Elijah disappeared, "they no longer saw (*eidon*, v. 8) any one with them but Jesus only." This strongly suggests a connection between the *idōsin* in verse 1 and the *eidon* in verses 8f. No less a person than Karl Barth is persuaded of an interpretation including three stages:

In the transfiguration they see and know him already, although only transitively, as the Resurrected. And in His resurrection they finally see the kingdom come with power, and therefore, in *parte pro toto*, as *arrabōn* and *apache*, that which in the *parousia*, as His general revelation, will be comprehensively and conclusively knowable and known as His glory.<sup>38</sup>

The second text relates the imminence and the inheritance of the kingdom in Luke 11:20 (cf. Matt. 12:28): "But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you." Here C. H. Dodd has made a better case, for it is generally agreed that *ephthasen* (has come) means "has arrived." *Phthanein* clearly has this meaning in I Thessalonians 2:16, II Corinthians 10:14, Philippians 3:16, and Romans 9:31. It is most instructive to compare I Thessalonians 2:16, where *ephthasen* means "has come," with I Thessalonians 4:15, where *phthasōmen* means "precede." This would suggest that in the exorcisms of Jesus in Luke 11:20 the powers of the coming kingdom have anticipated, preceded, or arrived in this present evil age. This does not, however, mean that the coming of the kingdom of God is "all over." In I Thessalonians 2:16 Paul says, "God's wrath has come (*ephthasen*) upon you at last!" but it is "the wrath to come" (I Thess. 1:10) that has surprised them in the present. As the coming wrath is so imminent that it may be spoken of as realized, so the exorcisms of Jesus, manifesting the powers of the coming age, make the coming kingdom a present reality.<sup>39</sup>

The third text in the Gospels is Luke 17:21: "Behold, the kingdom of God is in the midst of you." The phrase *entos humōn* (in the midst of you) was interpreted by Calvin to mean "within you,"<sup>40</sup> but modern exegesis tends more and

<sup>38</sup> *Church Dogmatics*, tr. Harold Knight, *et al.* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1960), III/2, p. 499. Cf. C. E. B. Camfield, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), p. 288.

<sup>39</sup> Fuller, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-27.

<sup>40</sup> *Institutes*, II.15.4.

more to accept the translation "in the midst of you."<sup>41</sup> With the singular the only other example of *entos* in the New Testament does mean "within" (Matt. 23:25), "the inside of the cup," but with the plural (*entos humōn*) it is best translated "in the midst of you."<sup>42</sup> This means that "there remains only the interpretation that the Kingdom of God has already become effective in advance in Jesus and in the present events appearing in connection with his person."<sup>43</sup> United with the exorcisms of Luke 11:20, it may be said that the powers of the coming kingdom of God were already operative in the work and person of Christ.

Some passages in Paul apparently teach that the power of the imminent kingdom is immanent. It seems that a sort of realized eschatology was rampant in Corinth, so that Paul could write with irony: "Already you are filled! Already you have become rich! Without us you have become kings! And would that you did reign, so that we might share the rule with you!" (I Cor. 4:8). These plutocratic people thought that they had already "brought in the kingdom," that they were, as Augustinian amillennialism later claimed, now in the millennium. The apostle, knowing that this is the time of humiliation, not the time of exaltation, lamented:

For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death; because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels and to men. We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute. To the present hour we hunger and thirst, we are ill-clad and buffeted and homeless, and we labor, working with our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we try to conciliate; we have become and are now, as the refuse of the world, the offscouring of all things (4:9-13).

Yet it may be that the power of the Spirit is the presence of the kingdom, and that is what Paul means when he reminds them: "For the kingdom of God does not consist in talk but in power" (4:20). For contemporary Christians about to talk themselves to death this is a timely admonition.

<sup>41</sup> There is a brief history by Bent Noack, *Das Gottesreich bei Lukas* (Uppsala, 1948).

<sup>42</sup> Bosch, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

<sup>43</sup> Kümmel, *op. cit.*, p. 35. Further documentation is furnished by Bosch and Kümmel.

Along with I Corinthians 4:20, the passage in Romans 14:17 may teach the same thing: "For the kingdom of God does not mean food and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." The *Talmud* says: "In the coming age there is no eating nor drinking nor propagation nor business nor hatred nor competition, but the righteous sit with their crowns on their heads feasting on the brightness of the divine presence" (*shekinah; Berakoth*, 17a). This is future, as in Matthew 8:11, when "many will come from east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven." The presence of the Holy Spirit, even in the present, creates the spiritual blessings of righteousness, peace, and joy. Joy is clearly a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22), but all three are a foretaste of the coming messianic banquet in God's presence. The kingdom in this passage has reference "to the new order, which is the final reality, but into which as even now partly actualized the Christian has been incorporated."<sup>44</sup>

One other passage in Paul speaks of the present reality of the kingdom in terms of the body of Christ. "He has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins" (Col. 1:13f.). As a conqueror deports captives from one place to another, so the beloved Son, through redemption and forgiveness, has "transferred us." Therefore they are exhorted: "And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you are called in the one body" (3:15). As members of the one body and heirs of the same kingdom they are indeed "fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God" (4:11, ASV), but they have already been transferred from the tyranny of sin into the realm of grace (cf. Rom. 6).

The final reference to the present reality of the kingdom is Hebrews 12:28. Colossians and Hebrews share the same high Christology, and the conception of the kingdom is similar also. The "kingdom that cannot be shaken" is "the heavenly realm of acceptable worship, with reverence and awe which is to displace all temporal and shadowy things."<sup>45</sup> Christ "has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father" (Rev. 1:5f.), but those around the throne still sing of a future reign, of Him who "hast made them

44. I.B., IX, 627.

45. I.B., XI, 750f.

a kingdom of priests to our God, and they shall reign on earth" (5:10). "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever" (11:15), but this reign is to find fulfillment in the millennium when the saints and martyrs will reign "with Christ a thousand years" (20:4). It is yet future: "they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and they shall reign with him a thousand years" (20:6). All of this is rooted in the wandering people of God to whom the promise was made: "you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Exod. 19:6). God's people are now "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation" (I Pet. 2:9), but they are at the same time "aliens and exiles" (2:11) on the earth.

This biblical concept of "a kingdom of priests," along with the other pictures of the present reality of the kingdom of God, is far removed from the evolutionary idea of the kingdom that dominated much of the thought of the nineteenth century and still survives in many quarters of Protestantism, both liberal and conservative. Schleiermacher's theology seeks to separate the *canonical* from the *apocryphal* by appeal to an evolutionary process that would ultimately lead "to a complete expulsion of the apocryphal and the pure preservation of the canonical."<sup>46</sup> Schleiermacher identified the coming of the kingdom with the increase of religious knowledge even as Richard Rothe put the emphasis on ethical progress.<sup>47</sup> Rothe sought to emancipate the *ethical* from the *ecclesiastical* and thus separate Christianity from the Church.

Albrecht Ritschl's "kingdom theology" was milder, but the distinction between the Church as the realm of *devotional* action (so central for Schleiermacher's theology) and the kingdom of God as the realm of *moral* action reduced the kingdom to little more than the ethical goals of mankind.<sup>48</sup> To Ritschl "Christianity, then, is the monotheistic, completely spiritual, and ethical religion, which, based on the life of its author as Redeemer and Founder of the Kingdom of God, consists in the freedom of the children of God, involves the impulse to

46 *The Christian Faith*, tr. H. R. Mackintosh and J. S. Stewart (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1928), p. 603.

47 Paul Althaus, *Die letzten Dinge*, 7. Auflage (Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann, 1957), pp. 231-250, subjects these two views to a rigorous criticism.

48 *Justification and Reconciliation*, tr. H. R. Mackintosh and A. B. Macaulay (New York: Scribner's, 1900), p. 284.

conduct from the motive of love, aims at the moral organization of mankind, and grounds blessedness on the relation of sonship to God, as well as on the Kingdom of God."<sup>49</sup> It is clear what he means by "the moral organization of mankind" when he says: "The Kingdom of God is the *summum bonum* which God realizes in men; and at the same time it is their common task, for it is only through the rendering of obedience of man's part that God's sovereignty possesses continuous existence."<sup>50</sup> But the dependence of God's sovereignty on the obedience of men is far removed from the biblical view of the kingdom of God.

*The Glory of the Kingdom.* The present powers of the kingdom are assurance of the glory that is to be revealed. The sayings and parables of our Lord point toward this glorious manifestation, when that which is now hidden will be made known and the riddles of life will be revealed. The idea of a second exodus frames much of His teaching as well as the rest of the New Testament.<sup>51</sup> One of the vivid examples may be seen in the beatitudes of Matthew 5:1-12, where the blessed live with "one foot in heaven." Moses went into a mountain to deliver his ten commandments, but Jesus went into a mountain to bestow his blessings (Matt. 5:3-12).

Blessed are the poor in spirit,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  
Blessed are those who mourn,  
for they shall be comforted.  
Blessed are the meek,  
for they shall inherit the earth.  
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,  
for they shall be satisfied.  
Blessed are the merciful,  
for they shall obtain mercy.  
Blessed are the pure in heart,  
for they shall see God.  
Blessed are the peacemakers,  
for they shall be called sons of God.  
Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake,  
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

49 *Ibid.*, p. 13.

50 *Ibid.*, p. 30.

51 This has been traced in detail by George Valentine, "The Concept of the New Exodus in the Gospels," unpublished dissertation in Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1961.

Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so men persecuted the prophets who were before you.

The first part of each beatitude speaks of the condition in this present evil age, but the second part (of nine out of ten) speaks of the reward of the age to come. The present tense in reference to "the kingdom of heaven" (5:3,10) is to be identified with the "reward" which is "great in heaven" (5:12). The whole "sermon on the mount" (Matt. 5-7) is "the new law, designed for the community whose members will inherit the kingdom."<sup>52</sup> Entrance into the kingdom is in the future (Matt. 5:19f.; 6:10, 33; 7:21).

The "sayings on the road" in Mark 9:30-10:45 agree with the sayings of the Sermon on the Mount. The sayings on stumbling (9:47; 10:14f.) have to do with entering the future kingdom when it comes. In Mark 9:47 entrance into the kingdom for some takes place at the time that others are thrown into Gehenna, the place of final punishment. The saying at the blessing of the children in Mark 10:14f. speaks of receiving the kingdom in the same way that Acts 8:14 speaks of receiving the word of God. It is believing the good news of the coming kingdom in which the simplicity of a child will displace the pride of a man. The sayings on reward in the story of the rich young man in Mark 10:17-31 identify the treasure in heaven (10:17) and the entrance into the kingdom of God (10:23) with the inheritance of eternal life in the age to come (10:17,30). The request of the sons of Zebedee puts the reward in "glory" (Mark 10:37). Later references to the kingdom of God in Mark (12:34; 14:25; 15:43) are in harmony with this idea of a future reward or inheritance. The saying in Luke 12:32 sums up the reception of the kingdom as a gift from God: "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

The parables of our Lord do not depart from the view of the kingdom expressed in the sayings. This is especially true in the sowing parables (Mark 4:2-8, 26-29). The early Church identified the sowing season with the earthly ministry of Christ, the time of growth with the interim between his first

52 I.B., VII, 278.

and second coming, and the harvest with the end of the age. In the modern revival of eschatological thinking Albert Schweitzer and his disciples followed this view that the sowing period was the preaching of John the Baptist and Jesus.<sup>53</sup> C. H. Dodd and his disciples now declare that the early Church and the consequent eschatology of Schweitzer were in error, and identify the sowing with the long period of preparation before the great harvest in the earthly ministry of Jesus.<sup>54</sup> One may agree with Dodd that there is at least one allusion to the harvest as present (Matt. 9:37f.; Luke 10:2), and that this is elaborated in John 4:35-38, without declaring that the early Church was in error when it identified the harvest of the sowing parables with the end of the age. The harvest figure can obviously be used one way in these sayings and another way in the parables.

The parable of the seed growing secretly (Mark 4:26-27), which is used as the motto of *The Christian Science Monitor*, has repeatedly been used to support the evolutionary view of a kingdom which has come in the past, is growing in the present, and will be consummated in the future. But the seed that is sown, as in all the sowing parables, is the gospel, not the kingdom, and the period of growth is the growth of the good news of a coming kingdom, not the evolutionary development of some kingdom identified with the sum total of churches. It is the word of God that increases in the interim between the sowing that began at the first coming and the harvest that takes place at the second coming of Christ (cf. the six summaries in Acts 6:7; 9:31; 12:24; 16:5; 19:20; 28:30f.).

The parable of the weeds (Matt. 13:24-30), found only in Matthew, like the parable of the seed growing secretly, found only in Mark, has two sowers, one of wheat and another of weeds. It seems impossible to dismiss the eschatological interpretation as a mistake of the early Church (Matt. 13:36-43), but this is done by Dodd with a vengeance: "We shall do well to forget this interpretation as completely as possible."<sup>55</sup> The parable of the mustard seed (Mark 4:30-32; Matt. 13:31; Luke 13:18f.), a sowing parable based on Ezekiel 17:22f; 31:6; Daniel 4:12, is also forced into the frame of realized eschatology: "The

53 *Geschichte der Leben-Jesu-Forschung*, 6 Auflage (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1951), p. 403.

54 Dodd, *op. cit.*, pp. 175-194.

55 *Ibid.*, p. 184.

Kingdom of God is here: The birds are flocking to find shelter in the shade of the tree.”<sup>56</sup>

Along with the picture of the great harvest is that of the great supper. A series of supper parables in Luke substantiates the teaching of the sowing parables that there is an interim between the preaching of the gospel and the coming of the kingdom. Luke 14:15 has included a banquet beatitude in the parable of the great supper (Luke 14:15-24; Matt. 22:1-10): “Blessed is he who shall eat bread in the kingdom of God!” This is further framed by Luke with the parable of the marriage feast (14:7-11) and another supper parable (14:12-14), the first contrasting present humility with future exaltation and the second the reward of the present with the reward “at the resurrection of the just.” The parable of the great supper elaborates the banquet beatitude and sets the men who made excuses, perhaps the privileged Jews, in contrast to the rejected, perhaps the Gentiles, who would attend the great messianic banquet. This is the same teaching as Matthew 8:11f.: “I tell you, many will come from east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth.” Both the banquet and the casting into outer darkness have to do with the future.

In the teaching of Paul (although I Corinthians 4:20, Romans 14:17, and Colossians 1:13 have to do with the power of the kingdom now operative in a hidden way) the inheritance of the kingdom revealed in glory is forcefully put in the future. Believers are “to lead a life worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory” (I Thess. 2:12). Steadfast faith in times of persecution is evidence of “the righteous judgment of God,” that the Thessalonians “may be made worthy of the kingdom of God” (II Thess. 1:5). Those who commit such acts as the catalogue of sins in Galatians 5:19-21 will “not inherit the kingdom of God.” Immoral, impure, and idolatrous men have no “inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God” (Eph. 5:5).

The most positive affirmation that the unrighteous will not “inherit the kingdom of God” is found in the lofty ethical exhortation in I Corinthians 6. I Corinthians also affirms that

56 *Ibid.*, p. 191.

it is at the resurrection, not here and now, that the righteous will inherit the kingdom. Paul plainly says that the resurrection must take place before the kingdom can be inherited: "I tell you this, brethren: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable" (I Cor. 15:50). At the resurrection, previously discussed, and at the *parousia*, discussed in a chapter to itself, the kingdom will be inherited by the righteous. Meanwhile they live in this "present evil age" tasting "the powers of the age to come."

"Therefore, brethren, be the more zealous to confirm your call and election, for if you do this you will never fall; so there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (II Pet. 1:10f.).<sup>57</sup>

57 As this goes to press two historical studies of kingdom of God research have appeared. Gösta Lundström, *The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1963); Norman Perrin, *The Kingdom of God in Teaching* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963).

## *Chapter Six*

### **The Final Pleroma**

**P**LEROMA (FULLNESS) is a New Testament word which provides a perspective for understanding both the present relation between Christ and His Church, and the future consummation of God's purpose in Israel and among the Gentiles.<sup>1</sup> The first usage is qualitative and spiritual, and the second is numerical, but there is a vital connection between the two. The Christ-event was "the *plēroma* of the time," when God sent forth His Son into history and His Spirit into the hearts of those who receive the sonship through faith (Gal. 4:4-7). In this event God "made known to us in all wisdom and insight the mystery of his will, according to his purpose which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fulness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth" (Eph. 1:9-10).

It pleased God that all the spiritual powers, the *plēroma*, should take up their abode in His Son so that there would be no need to worship any being other than that which was manifest in Christ (Col. 1:19). In Christ "the whole *plēroma* of deity dwells bodily" (Col. 2:9). As God made His abode first in Sinai and then in the temple at Jerusalem, so now He has come to dwell in Christ (Ps. 68:16). In Him all spiritual powers are accessible and available: "You have come to fulness of life in him" (Col. 2:10).

The *plēroma* that was bodily present in Christ is now present in His body the Church, which is "the *plēroma* of him who fills all in all" (Eph. 1:23). As the fleshly body was the temple in which all spiritual powers came to dwell, so now the exalted

<sup>1</sup> G. Delling, *Das Zeitverständnis des Neuen Testaments*, p. 112; TWNT, VI, 300-304.

Christ pours into His mystical body that which God poured into Him as the mystical head. The Church is not to be so identified with Christ that the distinction between the head and the body is obscured, but the Church is His organism by which the reconciliation of God is wrought in human history today. It was the prayer of Paul that the members of the Church, through which God now makes known His manifold wisdom, "may be filled with all the *plēroma* of God" (Eph. 3:19). It is not possible to follow the New Testament if we insist on a low view of the Church, even if we have a high view of Christ as head of the Church. The supreme purpose of all ministerial gifts is to "attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the *plēroma* of Christ" (Eph. 4:13).

The whole work of grace points to the *plēroma* of Christ which is imparted to those who believe: "And from his *plēroma* have we all received, grace upon grace" (John 1:16). The grace of God that filled His Son, the Christ, now fills His children, the Church.

The *plēroma* of God which has been made manifest in Christ and the Church will not be complete in the numerical sense until the consummation. The *plēroma* of history, which is the consummation, is not perfected at the point of the incarnation of God in Christ, although this is the point of clarification and inauguration, nor through the indwelling of God in the Church, although the perfect *plēroma* of the Church and the *plēroma* of the consummation have an inseparable relation. The *plēroma* which is the consummation is the completion of God's purpose in both Israel, His people of the old covenant, and in the Gentiles, who become His people along with Israel in the new covenant.

It is the neglected relation between eschatology and missions that is the special concern that brings the term *plēroma* into focus. Too long "the theology of missions," like "the theology of the social gospel," has been treated as a wandering star that has no definite relation to Christian theology in general. This is unfortunate to the extreme, for a "church theology" that is not a "missionary theology" has lost purpose.

#### THE PLEROMA OF ISRAEL

The *locus classicus* for understanding the fullness of Israel is a passage with a fascinating play on words. Speaking of Israel's

unbelief Paul says: "Now if their fall (*paraptōma*) means riches for the world, and if their failure (*hēttēma*) means riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fullness (*plēroma*) mean!" (Rom. 11:12, my translation). Fall-failure-fullness (*paraptōma-hēttēma-plēroma*) form the fulcrum for understanding the purpose of God in Israel and through Israel for the world. Historical purpose and eschatology are inseparable.

*God's Election of Israel.* God's election of Israel with her responsibility to the nations is the heart of the Old Testament.<sup>2</sup> The priesthood of Israel defines her role as the people of God through whom other peoples are to receive the blessings of God. In the covenant relation with the Lord, Israel is commissioned to be a priest to the world. Obedience to this role is the covenant responsibility of the whole nation. At Sinai the Lord said to Israel: "Now therefore, if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my own possession among all people; for all the earth is mine, and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Exod. 19:5f.). As God's possession Israel is the elect community in which the purpose of God is to be accomplished.

This election is grounded not in the virtue of Israel, but in the love of God. Deuteronomy 7:6-8 states: "For you are a people holy to the Lord your God; the Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for his own possession, out of all the peoples that are on the face of the earth. It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the Lord set his love upon you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples; but it is because the Lord loves you, and is keeping the oath which he swore to your fathers, that the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt." By God's selective love (*ahabah*) the covenant with Israel was made, and by his steadfast love (*chesed*) it is maintained.

Two strands of Old Testament teaching are of special significance for the priesthood of Israel. The first is the purpose of the seed of Abraham. God's purpose through Abraham is announced in the account of his migration from Haran. "And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make

<sup>2</sup> H. H. Rowley, *The Biblical Doctrine of Election* (London: Lutterworth, 1950), pp. 15-44.

your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who curses you I will curse; and by you all the families of the earth will bless themselves" (Gen. 12:2f.). This promise is repeated at the oaks of Mamre where the Lord says: "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, seeing that Abraham shall become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall bless themselves by him?" (Gen. 18:17f.).

At Mount Moriah, when Abraham is willing to sacrifice Isaac, the promise is made even clearer: "I will indeed bless you, and I will multiply your seed [RSV: descendants] as the stars of heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore. And your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies, and by your seed shall all the nations of the earth bless themselves, because you have obeyed my voice" (Gen. 22:17f.). To Isaac the promise was renewed: "I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and will give to your seed all these lands; and by your seed all the nations of the earth shall bless themselves" (Gen. 26:4). And again to Jacob it is said: "Your seed shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and by you and your seed shall all the families of the earth bless themselves" (Gen. 28:14). On the basis of such promises Paul was able to say that "the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham," and that the seed was Christ (Gal. 3:8,16). Even in the Old Testament God had a purpose for all nations in Abraham and his descendants.

The second strand is that of the servant of the Lord.<sup>3</sup> By the time of Isaiah the hope that God's purpose would be fulfilled in the nation as a whole was receding, and the hope that a faithful remnant would make known the name of the Lord was on the horizon.<sup>4</sup> The idea of the remnant may be found in the ministry of Elijah (I Kings 19:18) and in the message of Amos (3:12; 4:11; 5:15; 9:8), but it flowers in Isaiah. The remnant was small (1:9) and holy (4:3; 6:13), and it would surely return

<sup>3</sup> C. R. North, *The Suffering Servant in Deutero-Isaiah* (London: Oxford University Press, 1948); H. H. Rowley, *The Servant of the Lord and Other Essays on the Old Testament* (London: Lutterworth, 1952), pp. 3-88.

<sup>4</sup> John Bright, *The Kingdom of God* (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1953), pp. 71-97.

(7:3; 10:19-21) and be restored (11:11-16). Gleaning will be left after the olive tree is beaten (17:6), and the Lord will be "a crown of glory, and a diadem of beauty, to the remnant of his people" (28:5). God will still accomplish His purpose, for "the surviving remnant of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward; for out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and out of Mount Zion a band of survivors" (37:31f.).

Against the background that distinguishes between Israel and the faithful remnant of Israel, the Servant Songs, preserved in Isaiah 42:1-4; 49:1-6; 50:4-9; 52:13-53:12, may be understood as a proclamation of the priesthood of Israel. The first two songs are limited to the mission of the servant to the nations, the first announcing that "he will bring forth justice (*mishpat*) to the nations" and that "the coastlands wait for his law (*torah*)" (42:1,4). The parallelism of *mishpat* and *torah* perhaps indicates about the same as "true religion." The second song, which clearly identifies the servant with Israel, closes with the lofty statement (49:6):

It is too light a thing that you should be my servant  
to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore  
the preserved of Israel;  
I will give you as a light to the nations,  
that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.

The other two songs include suffering as a part of the servant's mission, the first promising vindication and the second victory. His sufferings are vicarious in nature and universal in effect. The servant will (52:15)

. . . startle many nations;  
kings shall shut their mouths because of him;  
for that which has not been told them they shall see,  
and that which they have not heard they shall understand.

The application of this role to the faithful remnant of Israel does not do violence to the identification of this role with the mission of Jesus. In this manner the extremes of both the individual and collective theories are avoided and justice is done to both the Old Testament and New Testament applications. The notion of "corporate personality," advocated by H. Wheeler Robinson, provides a satisfactory basis for this adaptation of the pyramid theory. The mission of Jesus is illuminated, not obscured, when it is seen as the continuation

and the consummation of God's intention in Israel. His purpose is "a light to the nations."<sup>5</sup>

The prophetic expectation that the nations would make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem to receive the blessings of the Lord offered through the priesthood of Israel constitutes a second current of hope that entered into the eschatological consciousness of the Old Testament.<sup>6</sup> This pilgrimage of the nations had elements of both weal and woe. Here, as at few places, the force of Isaiah 45:7 is felt: "I make weal and I create woe." This principle was graphically set forth by Isaiah when he gave one of his sons a weal name (*Shear-jashub*, a remnant shall return, Isa. 7:3) and another a woe name (*Maher-shalal-hashbaz*, the spoil speeds, the prey hastens, Isa. 8:1).

Among the pictures of weal one is of special significance: the house of the Lord. God proposes to establish His house so that all nations may there be blessed in the worship of the one true God. The house of the Lord is, first of all, a house of peace. In the universal reign of the one true God all the nations will live in peace and wars will cease. Isaiah 2:2-4 (Mic. 4:1-3) gives full expression to this universal hope:

It shall come to pass in the latter days  
 that the mountain of the house of the Lord  
 shall be established as the highest of the mountains,  
 and shall be raised above the hills;  
 and all the nations shall flow to it,  
 and many peoples shall come, and say:  
 "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,  
 to the house of the God of Jacob;  
 that he may teach us his ways  
 and that we may walk in his paths."  
 For out of Zion shall go forth the law,  
 and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.  
 He shall judge between the nations,  
 And shall decide for many peoples;  
 and they shall beat their swords into plowshares,  
 and their spears into pruning hooks;  
 nation shall not lift up sword against nation,  
 neither shall they learn war any more.

The centrality of Jerusalem for the blessing of the nations is

5 The title of a fascinating Old Testament introduction by Norman K. Gottwald, *A Light to the Nations* (New York: Harper, 1959).

6 David Bosch, *Die Heidenmission in der Zukunftschaus Jesu* (Zürich: Zwingli Verlag, 1959), pp. 23-28.

not confined to this vision of universal peace (Ezek. 38:12; Jer. 3:17; 4:2; 16:19; Zeph. 3:14-20; Isa. 25:6-9; 30:29; Joel 3:5; Ps. 87).

The house of the Lord is also a house of prayer. His house is "a house of prayer for all peoples" (Isa. 56:7). The failure of Israel to fulfill this purpose met the denunciation of Jesus and brought the temple worship under judgment. How much more can God's purpose be frustrated than to turn His house of prayer into a den of robbers? This was perhaps the most serious element in the clash between Jesus and the Jewish leaders. No greater charge could be made against Jesus, according to Jewish feelings, than the report that He said: "I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands" (Mark 14:58).

It is the purpose of God for the nations that prepares the way for the *pleroma* of both Israel and the Gentiles at the consummation of human history. Naaman the Syrian illustrates the movement of monotheism, for he came to worship the God of Israel and resolved that henceforth he would "not offer burnt offering or sacrifice to any god but the Lord" (II Kings 5:17). The prayer for the "foreigner," associated with the temple in Jerusalem, opens the way for Gentile devotion to the God of Israel (I Kings 8:41-43). Psalm 68:31 extends the invitation:

Let bronze be brought from Egypt;  
let Ethiopia hasten to stretch out her hands to God.

Zachariah visualized the conversion of the nations to the worship of the restored temple, and the fact that this was frustrated by the exclusivism of the post-exilic people does not bring final defeat to the purpose. "Thus says the Lord of hosts: Peoples shall yet come, even the inhabitants of many cities; the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, 'Let us go at once to entreat the favor of the Lord, and to seek the Lord of hosts; I am going.' Many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and to entreat the favor of the Lord. Thus says the Lord of hosts: In those days ten men from the nations of every tongue shall take hold of the robe of a Jew, saying, 'Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you'" (Zach. 8:20-23).

The darkness that had descended on Malachi in the presence of profane worship did not destroy the generous view that the Lord's name was not unknown among the nations. "For from

the rising of the sun to its setting my name is great among the nations, and in every place incense is offered to my name, and a pure offering; for my name is great among the nations, says the Lord of hosts" (Mal. 1:11).

The most radical universalism of all is found in the prophetic hope of Isaiah 19:24f., which says: "In that day Israel will be the third with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth, whom the Lord of hosts has blessed, saying, 'Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel my heritage.' "

The eschatological woe is proclaimed along with eschatological weal. The day of the Lord will be a day of woe, not only to the enemies of Israel but to Israel also. Amos shocked both Israel and Judah with the oracle (5:18-20):

Woe to you who desire the day of the Lord!

Why would you have the day of the Lord?

It is darkness, and not light;

as if a man fled from a lion, and a bear met him;  
or went into the house and leaned with his hand against the wall,  
and a serpent bit him.

Is not the day of the Lord darkness, and not light,  
and gloom with no brightness in it?

The Lord rules all the nations. He not only brought "Israel from the land of Egypt," but He also brought "the Philistines from Caphtor and the Syrians from Kir" (Amos 9:7). All will share the woe of judgment, but the weal of redemption will be open to all also. This hope for the last days appears later (Amos 9:11f.):

"In that day I will raise up  
the booth of David that is fallen  
and repair its breaches,  
and raise up its ruins,  
and rebuild it as in the days of old;  
that they may possess the remnant of Edom  
and all the nations who are called by my name,"  
says the Lord who does this.

This sequence of woe and weal is also illustrated in Zephaniah. The remnant is to wait for the action of God in wrath (3:8):

"Therefore wait for me," says the Lord,  
"for the day when I arise as a witness.  
For my decision is to gather nations,  
to assemble kingdoms,  
to pour out upon them my indignation,

all the heat of my anger;  
 for in the fire of my jealous wrath  
 all the earth shall be consumed."

Yet indignation of judgment produces purification of speech, made impure by the names of strange gods, that the nations may serve the Lord with one accord (3:9) :

"Yea, at that time I will change the speech of the peoples to a pure speech,  
 that all of them may call on the name of the Lord  
 and serve him with one accord. . . ."

Weal follows woe as light the darkness in the coming age of glory when nations will come to walk in the light of the Lord. Isaiah 60:2-3 says:

For behold, darkness shall cover the earth,  
 and thick darkness the peoples;  
 but the Lord will arise upon you,  
 and his glory will be seen upon you.  
 And nations shall come to your light,  
 and kings to the brightness of your rising.

The Apocalypse of Isaiah (24-27) has a picture of joy and light for all nations after the terror and darkness are past (25:6ff.): "On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of fat things, a feast of wine on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined. And he will destroy on this mountain the covering that is cast over all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death for ever, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth; for the Lord has spoken." Come weal or woe, God's election of Israel is the projection of a purpose that includes all the nations of the earth. The prophetic hope of the priesthood of Israel and the pilgrimage of the nations are the fulfillment of this purpose.

*God's Rejection of Israel.* God's rejection of Israel is focused around her failure to fulfill the purpose of election: "a light to the nations." The process which represents the true role of Israel in the purpose of God has been portrayed as both centripetal, an inward development of renewal, and centrifugal, a movement that goes forth, after the cross, to all nations.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Joachim Jeremias, *Jesus' Promise to the Nations*, tr. S. H. Hooke (Naperville, Illinois: Alec R. Allenson, 1958); Bosch, *op. cit.*

Jesus' use of several Old Testament figures illustrates how this process led from election to rejection.

The first is that of the flock. Jeremiah pronounced woe on the shepherds who scattered the flock of the Lord (23:1f.; 25:34f.), and to those oracles of woe were added the hope of weal when the Lord would gather His flock again (3:15-18; 23:3f.; 31:10). This picture is even more pronounced in Ezekiel's prophecy of the Lord God as the Good Shepherd, where the ideal king, mentioned also in Jeremiah 23:5f., is promised as the ruler over the gathered sheep of God (34:1-31). The impending restoration lifts the hope to a crescendo of comfort in Isaiah 40:11, but the Servant Songs mention the straying sheep whose iniquity brings suffering upon the Lord's servant (53:6). In the oracle on the good and worthless shepherds, found in Zechariah 11:4-17, weal has yielded again to woe, and the good shepherd has abandoned the sheep who reject his rule.

Against the background of Israel as the flock of the Lord the particularism of Jesus is made plain. He came to call the lost sheep back into the fold in order that God's purpose of election could be accomplished. His mission charge to the twelve apostles required no elaborate explanation (Matt. 10:5f.): "Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Despite the frenzied efforts to explain Matthew 10:23, made famous by Albert Schweitzer, it seems that Jesus did hope for a return of Israel to the fold and the inauguration of the glory of the Son of Man. This was a conditional prediction that remained unfulfilled, but it illuminates the original hope of the call made to Israel. "When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next; for truly, I say to you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel, before the Son of man comes." The careful analysis of the passage made by Jeremias changes some of the wording on the basis of the Aramaic language, but the authenticity, and meaning remain intact.<sup>8</sup> The very number of the twelve apostles indicates the concern of Jesus with the unity and ancient hope of Israel.

The activity of Jesus Himself was consistent with the charge to the apostles. A Canaanite woman, addressing Him by the

<sup>8</sup> Jeremias, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

significant title Son of David, requested that He deliver her daughter from the possession of a demon. The disciples wanted to send her away, but Jesus replied: "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. 15:24). The fact that He responded to her great faith does not remove the fact that He felt confined to the community of Israel and believed that it was the will of God that He should remain so. The initiative was taken by the woman, not by Him. Jesus had "other sheep" to call but not until He was crucified (John 10:16).

A second figure is that of the temple. Malachi developed the theme of the messenger who would purify the temple and prepare the way for the Lord who suddenly came to the purified temple (3:1). Matthew 21:12-22 (Mark 11:15-17) has this prophecy in mind when it says that Jesus cleansed the temple immediately on entering Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. The house that Isaiah 56:7 had proclaimed "a house of prayer for all peoples" had become, according to Jeremiah 7:11, "a den of robbers." This action of Jesus, so shocking to the religious leaders, was a messianic act of such significance that it can be nothing less than a call to fulfill the purpose of God to the nations. The miracle of the fruitless fig tree which follows represents the failure of Israel to bear fruit even though the outward appearance was one of flourishing religion.

The destruction of the temple is closely associated with the cleansing in both Luke and John. Luke 19:41-44 is a prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem to know the time of visitation. John 2:13-25 has the cleansing of the temple at the beginning of Jesus' ministry. Much has been said about this departure from the chronology in the Synoptic Gospels, but the answer is perhaps more theological than chronological. John presents a contrast between the religion of the Jewish temple, which failed to fulfill the purpose of God, and the new sanctuary, the Church, which would be the agency of God after the death and resurrection of Christ. The destruction of the temple in Jerusalem would not be the defeat of God's purpose in the world.

The temple teaching, along with the parable of the good shepherd, gives clear evidence that the Son of Man must be crucified before the Gentile mission could begin. One of the places where this order is most evident is the story of some Greeks who came to worship at the feast in Jerusalem and

wanted to see Jesus. It was on this occasion that Jesus was troubled in soul and recognized that the hour of His supreme sacrifice was at hand. When the voice came from heaven Jesus said: "Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the ruler of this world be cast out; and I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself" (John 12:31f.).

A third figure is that of the vineyard. In Isaiah 5:1-7 appears a song of the Lord's vineyard, composed perhaps to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles:

Let me sing for my beloved  
a love song concerning his vineyard:  
My beloved had a vineyard  
on a very fertile hill.  
He digged it and cleared it of stones,  
and planted it with choice vines;  
he built a watchtower in the midst of it,  
and hewed out a wine vat in it;  
and he looked for it to yield grapes  
but it yielded wild grapes.  
And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem  
and men of Judah,  
judge, I pray you, between me  
and my vineyard.  
What more was there to do for my vineyard,  
that I have not done in it?  
When I looked for it to yield grapes,  
why did it yield wild grapes?  
And now I will tell you  
what I will do to my vineyard.  
I will remove its hedge,  
and it shall be devoured;  
I will break down its wall,  
and it shall be trampled down.  
I will make it a waste;  
it shall not be pruned or hoed,  
and briars and thorns shall grow up;  
I will also command the clouds  
that they rain no rain upon it.  
For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts  
is the house of Israel,  
and the men of Judah  
are his pleasant planting;  
and he looked for justice,  
but behold, bloodshed;

for righteousness,  
but behold, a cry!<sup>9</sup>

It is not necessary to review in detail the complicated question of the authenticity of the parable of the vineyard in Mark 12:1-12 (Matt. 21:33-46, Luke 20:9-19). Much of the confusion and doubt springs from rigid adherence to the Adolf Jülicher theory that Jesus taught in pure parables only, never in allegory. Others have sufficiently rejected this axiomatic restriction and furnished evidence that the allegorical elements of this parable need not be related to the teaching of the primitive Church (*Gemeindetheologie*).

The teachings of the parable are deeply rooted in Isaiah 5:1-7. God is the owner of the vineyard, the people of Israel. The tenants are the rulers of Israel to whom the servants as the prophets of Israel were sent (Amos 3:7; Jer. 7:25; Zech. 1:6). After the shameful treatment of the servants, Jesus as the Son was sent to the vineyard, and Him they killed. The parable closes with an Old Testament quotation from Psalm 118:22f., one of the favorite proof texts of early Christian writers (Acts 4:11; I Pet. 2:4,7; Rom. 9:32f.; Eph. 2:20):

The very stone which the builders rejected  
has become the chief cornerstone.  
This is the Lord's doing;  
it is marvelous in our eyes.

Matthew 21:43 draws the obvious conclusion that God has rejected Israel and given the kingdom of God to a nation which would produce fruit. The rulers of Israel knew that the parable was directed at them.

The fourth figure of Israel's failure is that of a banquet. The Apocalypse of Isaiah spoke of the time when a banquet of the nations would take place on the mountain of God (Isa. 25:6-8), but the movement was thought of as centripetal. They must come to the holy mountain in order to witness the epiphany of God and enjoy the blessings of Israel. They would come "from afar," "from the north and from the west" to the festal gathering (Isa. 42:12). It is this hope that lies behind Jesus' teachings about a great banquet to which all would be invited; yet the exclusion of Israel was a shocking innovation.

<sup>9</sup> The theological introduction to the Old Testament by B. Davie Napier, *Son of the Vineyard* (New York: Harper, 1962), develops this theme.

In response to the centurion's faith He declared: "I tell you, many will come from east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness: there men will weep and gnash their teeth" (Matt. 8:11f.). Worship of all the peoples of the earth at the world sanctuary was no new idea, but a picture of "the sons of the kingdom" "thrown into the outer darkness" of total rejection with remote peoples sharing the blessings of the patriarchs must have startled the religious leaders like the crack of doom. The parallel in Luke 13:29 is associated with the saying: "And behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last" (Luke 13:30). This can only mean that the people once elected are now a people rejected because the fruit of the kingdom has not been found.

The parable of the wedding feast points to the picture of rejection in a still more dismal way (Matt. 22:1-10; Luke 14:16-24). God at first invited Israel to the marriage feast of His Son, but they rejected the invitation delivered by His servants the prophets. This brought the judgment of God upon Jerusalem in A.D. 70 and forfeited the kingdom of the coming age: "The king was angry, and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city" (Matt. 22:7). The parable of the wedding garment is added by Matthew not only to point out the necessity of righteousness and repentance but to prepare for the summary saying: "For many are called, but few are chosen" (Matt. 22:14).

#### THE PLEROMA OF THE GENTILES

Some instances of a centrifugal movement of God's mercy toward the Gentiles may be found in such Old Testament writings as Jonah (4:11) and Malachi (1:11), but the central thrust is centripetal. Through Israel the nations of the earth are to receive their blessings. This is the point of departure for understanding the Gentile mission in the New Testament. This mission may be described first in relation to the twelve and then in relation to the two (Peter and Paul).

*The Mission of the Twelve.* The twelve are prominent in Mark's Gospel (3:14; 4:10; 6:7; 10:32; 11:11; 14:10,17,43), and this technical use suggests the restoration of God's purpose in Israel. Jesus "appointed twelve, to be with him, and to be sent out to preach and have authority to cast out demons"

(3:14). It was to "the twelve" that He gave "the secrets of the kingdom of God" (4:10f.). When "the twelve" were sent out two by two He "gave them authority over the unclean spirits" (6:7), so that the *exousia* (authority) manifest in Jesus was transferred to the twelve. It was "the twelve" that first learned what was to happen to Jesus in Jerusalem (10:32). At Bethany "the twelve" were with Him, but it was one of "the twelve" that betrayed Him (14:10,43). With "the twelve" He gathered in the upper room (14:17).

The mission to the nations in Mark appears in the Markan apocalypse (13:10): "And the gospel must first be preached to all nations." Believing that this is a condition for the second coming of Christ, many zealous Christians have labored faithfully among the people of all nations. Two able assessments have been made of this interpretation. Joachim Jeremias thinks that "the original reference is not to human proclamation, but to an apocalyptic event, namely, the angelic proclamation of God's final act" (cf. Rev. 14:6f.).<sup>10</sup> David Bosch, in his more detailed discussion, reaches a more conservative conclusion. To him the interim between the passion and the *parousia* is a time of grace in which the gospel may be preached to all nations, not a condition that must be fulfilled before the *parousia* can take place.<sup>11</sup> This is in harmony with the long ending of Mark (16:9-19), although Mark 16:15 can be used only in a secondary sense.

Matthew's Gospel adds two eschatological emphases, although "the twelve" (10:5; 26:14) are usually described as "the twelve disciples" (10:1; 11:1; 20:17; 26:20) or "the twelve apostles" (10:2). The mission of "the twelve apostles" (10:2) to Israel is elaborated, but they are strictly charged: "Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (10:5f.). This may be understood to mean not that there is no concern for Gentiles and Samaritans but that the lost sheep of Israel should be gathered first. To this note of weal is added a note of woe, for the disciples "will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. 19:28; Luke 22:30).

Matthew's close linking of the twelve with Israel does not exclude a centrifugal movement to the nations. The prologue

10 Jeremias, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

11 Bosch, *op. cit.*, pp. 132-200.

records that "wise men from the East came to Jerusalem" (2:1) at the birth of Christ, and Book I (3:1-7:28) gives special emphasis to the fact that Jesus fulfilled a prophecy about "Galilee of the Gentiles" when He came to dwell in Capernaum (4:15). Much has already been said about His shocking prophecy that "many will come from east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven (8:11). There is no textual question about the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20 as there is about the commission in the long ending of Mark (16:9-19), but F. C. Conybeare may have more cogency than most concede when he argues on evidence from Eusebius for the short form of Matthew 28:18-20:

All authority has been given to me  
in heaven and on earth  
Go therefore and make disciples of all nations,  
in my name,  
Teaching them to observe all  
that I have commanded you;  
and lo, I am with you always,  
to the close of the age.<sup>12</sup>

This rendering not only harmonizes with baptizing "in the name of Jesus Christ" in Acts (2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5; 22:16), but it also strengthens the evidence for a commission of the twelve to "all nations" so that through the gathering of Israel all nations are to be blessed.

Luke's Gospel speaks frequently of "twelve" (6:3) or "the twelve" (8:1; 9:1; 9:12; 18:31; 22:3, 30, 47), but only the reference to "the twelve" (8:1) and the ministering women is distinctive. The more distinctive characteristic in Luke is increased emphasis on the Gentile mission. The *Nunc Dimittis* (2:29-32) speaks of "a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to thy people Israel." At the beginning of the travel narrative (9:51-18:14) Jesus sent messengers to prepare the way for Him in the villages of the Samaritans, and when James and John wanted to call fire from heaven upon them for refusing to receive Him they were rebuked. The mission of the seventy (10:1-24) has often been thought to have reference to the seventy Gentile nations of Genesis 10, and it is sure that a

<sup>12</sup> *Zeitschrift fur neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* (1901), pp. 275-288; David Bosch, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

Gentile mission is entrusted to the faithful eleven in 24:46-49. This commission is renewed in Acts 1:8.

References to "the twelve" have almost disappeared in the Fourth Gospel (6:67,70f.), but there the strongest universalism is found. John the Baptist identified Jesus as "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (1:29). John 2:23-4:54 is a cycle of three stories in which Jesus ministers to Nicodemus the Pharisee, the woman of Samaria, and a Gentile nobleman.<sup>13</sup> After the conversation with Nicodemus it is said that "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (3:16). The Samaritans say to the woman: "We know that this is indeed the Savior of the world" (4:42). The Gentile nobleman "believed, and all his household" (4:53). Jesus is also "the light of the world (8:12), and the shepherd who has "other sheep" not of the fold of Israel that must be called so that there will be "one flock, one shepherd" (10:16). Jesus declared: "I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself" (12:32). Jesus commissions the disciples and imparts the Spirit to them in 20:21-23 in order that they may forgive the sins of "any."

*The Mission of the Two.* It is the contrast between the missions of the two, the apostleship of Peter and the apostleship of Paul, that the *pleroma* (numerical fullness) comes into full focus. The Peter-Paul polarity is so pronounced in Acts that R. B. Rackham divides his commentary on Acts into two parts: the acts of Peter (1-12) and the acts of Paul (13-28). The almost perpetual prominence of Peter in Jerusalem from the time he "stood up among the brethren" (1:15) until "he departed and went to another place" (12:17), and the dominant role of Paul after 13:1, is adequate justification for Rackham's view. Oscar Cullmann's concise remark states clearly the impression of the two parts of Acts: "The first part (chs. 1 to 12) closes with the imprisonment of Peter; the second (chs. 13 to 28) with that of Paul."<sup>14</sup>

The overlapping of Paul (9:1-31) and Peter (15:6-11) provides a bridge between the ministries of the two, and it should not be overlooked that Peter was the first to take the gospel beyond the bounds of Judaism. Peter's position in the

13 R. H. Strachan, *The Fourth Gospel* (London: SCM, 1941), pp. 128-165.

14 *Peter*, tr. Floyd V. Filson (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1953), p. 38.

Jerusalem church may have been at first administrative (Acts 1:15; 2:14,37; 3:1,4,6,11; 4:8,13; 5:3,8f.,15,29), but the administration soon shifted to James (12:17; 15:13; 21:18), so that Peter could give himself to missionary activity.

His first missionary field was Samaria. Jesus had spoken of Samaria as fields "white unto harvest" (John 4:35), and "many Samaritans from the city believed on him because of the woman's testimony" (4:39). Jesus Himself stayed with the Samaritans, "and many more believed because of his word" (4:41), but it took persecution to prod the Jerusalem church to continue the harvest of Samaritan souls (Acts 8:1-8). Under the leadership of Philip a great harvest took place so that "there was much joy in that city" (8:8). Even though the people had believed and were baptized, they did not receive the Spirit until Peter and John came down from Jerusalem "and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit" (8:15). It was on the return to Jerusalem that Peter took up his own missionary activity among "the Samaritans" (8:25). This event is also linked with Philip's preaching to the Ethiopian eunuch (8:26-40), so that Philip stands out even before Peter as the first missionary of the Jerusalem church.

Peter's second missionary activity was in Caesarea. He "went here and there among them all" (Acts 9:32) before he preached in Lydda and Joppa, but it was in Caesarea that he made his complete breakthrough in preaching to Gentiles. God spoke to Cornelius the centurion telling him that his prayers were heard and that he should send for Peter in Joppa (10:1-8). Meanwhile, Peter was in a trance and saw a vision in which a sheet was filled with things common and unclean, and this was interpreted as a sign that he should go to Caesarea to preach to Cornelius (10:9-29). When Cornelius told Peter what had happened, Peter concluded that "God shows no partiality, but in every nation any one who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him" (10:34f.). As Peter preached the gospel, even before baptism and the laying on of hands, the Holy Spirit came upon Cornelius and "all who heard the word" (10:44). Peter was convinced, after "the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles" (10:45), that "to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance unto life" (11:18).

The disciples were at first called followers of the Way (9:2; 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:14, 22; 25:3; 26:13), but in Antioch, the center

of the Gentile mission, they became known as Christians (11:26). In three waves (6:7; 9:31; 12:24) the Jewish mission, through evangelistic expansion, had jumped the dykes and some of the persecuted from Cyprus and Cyrene came to Antioch and "spoke to the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus" (11:20). We do not know the names of the founders of the Gentile center, but "the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number that believed turned to the Lord" (11:21). Now in three new waves the new and mighty Gentile mission reached even to Rome (16:5; 19:20; 28:30f.).

The first wave (13:1-16:5) reports the preaching in Antioch of Pisidia. Here the Jews were the first to hear the gospel, but their strong opposition provoked the bold statement of Paul and Barnabas which says: "It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken first to you. Since you thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles. For so the Lord has commanded us, saying, 'I have set you to be a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the uttermost parts of the earth'" (13:46f.).

The result of this declaration among the Gentiles was tremendous: "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of God; and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed" (13:48). At the end of this first preaching mission Paul and Barnabas reported "all that God had done with them, and how he had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles" (14:27). Later Paul and Barnabas went on their way to the Jerusalem conference "reporting the conversion of the Gentiles" (15:3), and at the conference Peter told how God chose that "Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe" from his mouth (15:7). After the report of Paul and Barnabas, the leaders of the Gentile mission, and of Peter, the leader of the Jewish mission, James supported the reception of the Gentiles and gained the approval of the first missionary conference in Christian history (15:12-35).

The second wave (16:6-19:20) repeats the pattern of preaching first to the Jews, but this time the rising tide reaches into Europe. The crown congregation of Philippi, that was to be a pillar of strength for Paul, started in a "place of prayer" (16:13), the name of a Jewish place of worship with less than twelve family heads. At other places the familiar synagogue with at least twelve family heads became the point of departure for Paul's powerful missionary preaching (17:1,10; 18:4,7,19,26;

19:8). The strong opposition of the Jews in Corinth brought a break, and Paul "shook out his garments and said to them, 'Your blood be upon your heads! I am innocent. From now on I will go to the Gentiles'" (18:6).

A third wave (19:21-28:30f.) takes Paul to Rome as the basis for world evangelism. On the way to Jerusalem he preached a sermon to the elders of Ephesus in which he summarized his mission as "testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance to God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ" (20:21). In Jerusalem Paul first related to the Jewish brethren, including James, "one by one the things God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry" (21:19). In his defense before the people after his arrest, Paul testified how God had told him: "Depart; for I will send you far away to the Gentiles" (22:21). At the hearing before Agrippa, Paul again referred to his commission on the Damascus road (26:12-18), and concluded with the ringing affirmation (26:19-23):

Wherefore, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but declared first to those at Damascus, then at Jerusalem and throughout all the country of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God and perform deeds worthy of their repentance. For this reason the Jews seized me in the temple and tried to kill me. To this day I have had the help that comes from God, and so I stand here testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would come to pass: that the Christ must suffer, and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to the people and to the Gentiles.

Acts 28:28 brings the third wave to a close with this declaration: "Let it be known to you then that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will listen." This is the picture of God's "chosen vessel" who was commissioned to preach the gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15).

The mission of Paul to the Gentiles is characterized by an apostolic consciousness second only to the messianic consciousness of Jesus.<sup>15</sup> There are four accounts of his conversion and commission (Acts 9:1-19, 22:3-16; 26:4-18; Galatians 1:13:17).

In Acts 9:15f. the Lord Himself speaks and says to Ananias in regard to Saul the persecutor: "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings

<sup>15</sup> Johannes Munck, *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind*, tr. Frank Clarke (Richmond, Virginia: John Knox, 1959), pp. 11-68.

and the sons of Israel; for I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name." This is in complete harmony with Paul's own estimate of his mission when he says: "Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church, of which I became a minister according to the divine office which was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now made manifest to his saints" (Col. 1:24-26). The relationship between the phrase "for the sake of my name" and the phrases "for your sake" and "for the sake of his body" reflects the full meaning of the question: "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" (Acts 9:4). To persecute the members of Christ's body is to persecute Christ, even as suffering for "the sake of his body" is suffering "for the sake of" his name.

In Acts 22:14f. Ananias tells Saul: "The God of our fathers appointed you to know his will, to see the Just One and to hear a voice from his mouth; for you will be a witness for him to all men of what you have seen and heard." The *ho dikiaos* (the Just One) is a title the early Church employed to designate the Messiah in his sufferings (Acts 3:14; 7:52), and Paul is called to be a witness (*martus*) "to all men." The mission "to all men" is a shorter form of the mission "before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel" in Acts 9:15.

In Acts 26:15-18 the apostolic mission is not spoken through Ananias as in 22:14f. but directly to Saul by the risen Lord who says:

I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. But rise and stand upon your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you to serve and bear witness to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you, delivering you from the people and from the Gentiles — to whom I send you to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.

The appointment (*procheirisasthai*) as a servant and a witness (*hupēretēn kai martura*) agrees with Paul's understanding of his stewardship when he says: "This is how one should regard us, as servants (*hupēretas*) of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God" (I Cor. 4:1).

The three accounts of Paul's call and commission make it clear that the stories of Jeremiah and of the Servant of the Lord in Isaiah deeply colored the apostolic consciousness of Paul. Jeremiah was appointed "a prophet to the nations" (Jer. 1:5), and the Servant was to "bring forth justice (*mishpat*) to the nations" (Isa. 42:1), to be "a light to the nations" (49:6), and "to startle many nations" (52:15). We get to the bottom of Paul's apostolic consciousness when all of this erupts in his own words in Galatians 1:15ff.:

But when he who had set me apart before I was born [from my mother's womb], and had called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned to Damascus.

Judges 16:17; Psalm 22:9f.; 71:6 speak of God's action "from my mother's womb" (*ek koilias mētros mou*), and Jeremiah 20:7-9 describes the compelling power of the divine call, but Paul appears to state his apostolic consciousness in terms of the Servant of the Lord in Isaiah 49:5f. There the Servant speaks of the Lord who formed him "from the womb to be his servant," and the Lord gives the Servant to be "a light to the nations." God formed Jeremiah "in the womb" to be "a prophet to the nations," but Paul's apostolic consciousness is nearest to the messianic consciousness of the Servant.

The relationship between the messianic consciousness of Jesus and the apostolic consciousness of Paul appears in a striking way when Paul relates the mission of Jesus among the circumcision to his own mission among the Gentiles. Paul declares that "Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy" (Rom. 15:8f.). After a series of Gentile proof texts from the Old Testament (Ps. 18:49; II Sam. 22:50; Deut. 32:43; Ps. 117:1, Isa. 11:10), Paul sums up his own sense of mission:

But on some points I have written to you very boldly by way of reminder, because of the grace given me by God to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In Christ Jesus, then,

I have reason to be proud of my work for God. (Rom. 15:15-17).

The parallel between the mission and passion of Jesus, and the mission and passion of Paul, is pronounced in Luke-Acts. In Luke 9:51-53 it is said of Jesus: "When the days drew near for him to be received up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem. And he sent messengers ahead of him, who went and entered a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him; but the people would not receive him, because his face was set toward Jerusalem." Paul was never more like his Lord than when he said:

And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, bound in the Spirit, not knowing what shall befall me there; except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me. But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may accomplish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God (Acts 20:22-24).

Luke apparently expects the reader to see the parallel between Jesus and Paul here in the same manner that the death of Stephen (Acts 7:54-60) is parallel to the death of Jesus (Luke 23:39-49).

The summary statement of the missions of the two appears in Galatians 2:1-10:

Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along with me. I went up by revelation; and I laid before them (but privately before those who were of repute) the gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, lest somehow I should be running or had run in vain. But even Titus, who was with me, was not compelled to be circumcised, though he was a Greek. But because of false brethren secretly brought in, who slipped in to spy out our freedom which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage — to them we did not yield submission even for a moment, that the truth of the gospel might be preserved for you. And from those who were reputed to be something (what they were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality) — those, I say, who were of repute added nothing to me; but on the contrary, when they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been entrusted with the gospel to the circumcised (for he who worked through Peter for the mission to the circumcised worked through me also for the Gentiles), and when they perceived the grace that was given

to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised; only they would have us remember the poor, which very thing I was eager to do.

This mission of the two is as important for understanding the fullness of the Gentiles as is the mission of the twelve for the fullness of Israel.

The mission of Paul to the Gentiles becomes enveloped in mystery as the problem of Israel's rejection deepens. This mystery of Israel is explored to the point of bewilderment in Romans 11:1-36. The remnant of Israel (11:1) believed in Jesus as the Christ, but the rest were blinded (11:7-12). As were the days of Elijah so were the days of Paul: a remnant remained faithful to the promises of God (cf. I Kings 19:10, 14, 18). Those who were blinded had the "spirit of stupor" described in Isaiah 29:9f. and their feast had "become a snare . . . a trap" according to Psalm 69:22f. This is summed up in the fascinating play on words: "Now if their fall (*paraptoma*) means riches for the world, and if their failure (*hēttēma*) means riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fullness (*plēroma*) mean!" (Rom. 11:12; my trans.).

The rejection of Israel (11:13-24) is reasoned by argument and allegory. The argument (11:13-16) is based upon the belief that Israel's rejection made it possible for the gospel to be brought to the Gentiles so that in the end Israel would be provoked to accept what she once had rejected. Israel's rejection means the reconciliation of the world, and her acceptance will be nothing less than life from the dead. Since the fathers of Israel were holy, the whole of Israel has become consecrated: "If the dough offered as first fruits is holy, so is the whole lump; and if the root is holy, so are the branches" (11:16). This assures a future purpose of God with Israel.

The allegory of the olive branches (11:17-24) illustrates the argument of Israel's present rejection and future acceptance. Gentiles are only a wild shoot grafted into a tree from which the natural branches have been lopped off by unbelief. If the Gentiles do not continue in belief they will be lopped off too, even as Israel may be restored "if they do not persist in their unbelief" (11:23). "God has power to graft them in again" (11:23): This is the basis of Paul's *plēroma* hope.

The return of Israel (11:25-36) as an eschatological hope has

deep roots in the Old Testament.<sup>16</sup> The deepening mystery of this question leads Paul to the place where debate is precipitated as to whether Paul is a universalist. What does he mean by the *plēroma* (full number) of the Gentiles (11:25)? What does he mean by the *plēroma* of Israel (11:12) or that "all Israel will be saved" (11:25)? Conservative and critical thought have both been concerned with the answers to these questions.<sup>17</sup> The amillennial view found in the writings of John Calvin identifies Israel with "all of the people of God."<sup>18</sup> This he does by appeal to Galatians 6:16 which speaks of "the Israel of God" as the people of God, but this would violate the meaning of "Israel" in the other ten places in the context. The dispensational view that finds modern expression in the theology of L. S. Chafer makes Israel "the nation of Israel" and look forward to a future restoration during the millennium when all the unfulfilled prophecies of the Old Testament will come to pass,<sup>19</sup> but this is not in harmony with Paul's statement that "not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel" (Rom. 9:6). The realized eschatology of C. H. Dodd insists that the "all Israel" means "the historical nation of Israel" and this combined with "the full number of the Gentiles" makes Paul a universalist.<sup>20</sup> This not only contradicts Romans 9:6, but it also requires a future eschatology that is out of harmony with Dodd's realized eschatology.

All three of these views fail to follow Paul's clue in Romans 9:6: "For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel." Paul believed that God's ultimate purpose included both the "full number" (*plēroma*) of Israel (11:12) and the "full number (*plēroma*) of the Gentiles" (11:25), but these statements need to be understood against the background of

16 Paul Heinisch, *Theology of the Old Testament*, tr. William Heidt (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1950), pp. 281-284.

17 A conservative survey is by William Hendriksen, *And So All Israel Shall Be Saved* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1945), and a critical view is presented by Erich Dinkler, "The Historical and the Eschatological Israel in Romans, Chapters 9-11: A Contribution to the Problem of Predestination and Individual Responsibility," *Journal of Religion*, XXXVI (April 1956), 109-127.

18 *Romans*, tr. John Owen (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948), p. 437. Cf. O. T. Allis, *Prophecy and the Church* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1945), pp. 236-255.

19 *Systematic Theology* (Dallas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1948), IV, 310-328.

20 *Romans* (New York: Harper, 1932), pp. 182-187.

Paul's doctrine of election. When this is done the conclusion becomes clear that he believed that missionary activity would continue until all the elect Gentiles and all the elect Israelites have come to Christ, all the believing Gentiles and all the believing Israelites. Paul was no universalist; he was a missionary. Before this eschatological hope Paul was plunged into praise: "O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!" (11:33).

The unity of two apostleships in the consummation is anticipated in the one body of Christ, the Church, where "by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body — Jews or Greeks, slaves or free — and all were made to drink of one Spirit" (I Cor. 12:13). This anticipation begins in the act of initiation in Christian baptism: "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:27f.). When the new man is put on the Gentile and the Israelite become one: "Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all, and in all" (Col. 3:11). Christ "is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law of commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby bringing the hostility to an end" (Eph. 2:14-16). Paul's practical application of this principle was a cash contribution from the Gentile Christians to help Jewish Christians in their time of need (I Cor. 16:1-3; II Cor. 8 and 9).

A vision of the consummation in which God will preserve Israel and the Gentiles appears in Revelation 7. It is customary for commentaries to identify the hundred and forty-four thousand of Revelation 7:1-8 as the martyrs on the earth, with the "great multitude which no man could number" of Revelation 7:9-17 as the same martyrs in heaven.<sup>21</sup> This allegorical interpretation not only requires a numbered group to be identified with an unnumbered group, but the descriptions of each company defies the identity. How can Israel be identified with those

21 I.B., *ad loc.*

out of "every nation, from all tribes and peoples and tongues" (7:9)? The Jewish Christian Hugh S. Schonfield made the identification more accurate by calling those in Revelation 7:1-8 "loyal Israel" and the group in Revelation 7:9-17 "the redeemed of the Gentiles."<sup>22</sup>

Even "the spiritual gospel" of John agrees with the apocalyptic imagery of Revelation. In the story of the good shepherd Jesus says: "And I have other sheep, that are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will heed my voice. So there shall be one flock, one shepherd" (John 10:16). The comment on the Greeks embraced "all men" also (John 12:32).

The mystery of Israel in relation to Jesus Christ has perplexed those who would understand the meaning of history. After reflection on the *mysterium magnum* in which Israel is the mother-of-pearl and Jesus Christ the pearl, the Jewish writer Franz Werfel expresses his eschatological hope in terms of *Joseph and His Brethren*. It is not in the past but in the future that Jesus who has suffered at the hands of His brethren will stand before them as Joseph.

Corresponding to this and in constant spiritual climax, there will be between Christ and Israel when the time is ripe enough, i.e. lean enough, still many a dramatic vexation and many a sublime drama before the ennobled brother makes himself known to his humbled brethren, 'I am Jesus, your brother, the Messiah. . . .'<sup>23</sup>

Werfel's eschatological longing for the end of time "when grace will have struck the balance" is strangely similar to the sorrow of Paul who penetrated the mystery enough to plunge. Why does Werfel wait?

The same mystery confronted the Russian Orthodox scholar Nicolas Berdyaev, for in a chapter on "The Destiny of the Jews" he wrestles with their historical consciousness and the dualism that drove them toward either a true or false Messiah in words that echo the pathos of Paul.

They failed to recognize and repudiated the Messiah the Christ. This is the central event in world history, the event towards which history had been moving and from which it has since proceeded; the event which makes of the Jews, as it were, the axis of universal history . . . This brings us to the fundamental

22 *The Authentic New Testament, ad loc.*

23 *Between Heaven and Earth*, tr. Maxim Newmark (New York: Philosophical Library, 1944), p. 210.

paradox of both Jewish and Christian history, namely, that the latter would have been impossible without the former. There would have been no Golgotha without the Jews, and yet they could not accept the mystery. . . An ultimate solution to the Jewish problem is possible only on the eschatological plane. Such a solution will coincide with that of universal history. And it will represent the last act in the struggle between Christ and Anti-christ. Therefore the problem of universal history cannot be solved without the religious self-determination of Judaism.<sup>24</sup>

Among Protestant philosophers the same perplexity with Israel remains. John Macmurray says:

If the world is thought religiously as the act of a working God, it follows at once that this historic peculiarity of Jewish history is fundamental to the whole process of the world. It means that it is through the Jewish people that the significance of the world has been and is being revealed.<sup>25</sup>

This mission of Israel to the world is inseparable from the mission of Jesus Christ to the Jewish people.

The mission of Jesus to his own people is to reveal to them what has been implicit in their cultural history from the beginning, to declare to them what they are called to do and to demand their acceptance of the task and of its conditions.<sup>26</sup>

The call has come, the historical purpose moves on to the *plēroma* of both the Gentiles and Israel, but the consummation of the ages is the coming of the Messiah who was rejected but will be accepted: the *parousia*.<sup>27</sup>

24 *The Meaning of History*, tr. George Reavey (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1936), pp. 92, 105f., 107.

25 *The Clue to History* (New York: Harper, 1939), p. 54.

26 *Ibid.*, p. 55.

27 This chapter was in final form before the arrival of an important study of the subject by Gregory Baum, *The Jews and the Gospel* (Westminster, Maryland: Newman, 1959).

## *Chapter Seven*

### **The Antichrist**

THE *parousia* OF CHRIST, the manifestation of the hidden presence, stands in polarity with the *parousia* of Antichrist. Nicolas Berdyaev, on philosophical grounds, has well said: "The dualism inherent in the Jewish messianic consciousness determined the fateful destiny of the Jews insofar as it combined the expectation of the true Messiah, the Son of God, who was to appear among the Jews, and that of the false Messiah, or Antichrist."<sup>1</sup>

In biblical thought this inherent dualism finds expression in powerful religious symbolism that may mystify the modern mind unaccustomed to mythological thinking. Mythological thinking dramatizes in action the cosmic and ultimate reality. The concreteness of myth often expresses truth more adequately than abstract ideas. Failure to see this has left rationalism stranded and thinking that "myth" means that which is not "true."

Mythology is transformed rather than discarded by the realism of historical revelation. With reference to the struggle between the demonic and the divine this may be illustrated by the use of a Canaanite myth in Isaiah 14:12-21. The brilliant rising of the morning star followed by a sudden dimming before the rising sun suggested to the mythical mind a struggle in which *Helal* (the Morning Star), the younger god in insolent rebellion against *Elyon* (the Most High), recedes before the more powerful god.<sup>2</sup>

1 *The Meaning of History*, tr. George Reavey (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1936), p. 92. Cf. Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker, *The History of Nature*, tr. Fred D. Wieck (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949), p. 189: "Christ renders Anti-Christ possible."

2 Brevard S. Childs, *Myth and Reality in the Old Testament* (London: SCM, 1960), pp. 67-71.

Historical revelation compares the king of Babylon to the upstart *Helal*, and Yahweh to the Most High who is victor. The king of Babylon has been cast in a cosmic role in his rebellion to God, and that which once was in the realm of nature has been cast into the conflicts of history.

Much the same may be seen in the lamentation over the king of Tyre (Ezek. 28:11-19). Eden is identified with "the garden of God" and "the holy mountain of God," a cosmic sanctuary far less earthly than the concept of Genesis 2:10-14. The picture in Ezekiel is more of a heavenly sanctuary, while that in Genesis is earthly; but in this heavenly sanctuary the king of Tyre is said to dwell.<sup>3</sup> Language is used of the king that makes him both heavenly and earthly, and this has led to endless speculation as to whether this does not have to do with the prehistorical fall of Satan.

Perhaps it is best to say that a historical person has been decorated with heavenly language, although it is not altogether wrong to see in this story a heavenly (or demonic) power behind his earthly throne, much as is seen in the New Testament (Rom. 13:1-7; Eph. 6:12). Here again the morbid fear of mythical language among modern rationalists makes it all but impossible to appreciate the profound truth of the inspired writer. As it was in the beginning, so it is now with the king of Tyre. The depths of biblical dualism are disclosed by the mythological method.

Biblical dualism is more realistic than Iranian eschatology, which is dominated by an optimistic bias that the demonic powers will gradually recede until the last remnant of evil and wickedness shall disappear at the final end. The dialectic of the demonic and the divine in the fluctuating battle between the children of darkness and the children of light discloses a dimension of cosmic evil and human sin that escapes less personal eschatology. The personal hostility of Satan to the sovereign will of a saving God posits a dramatic and persistent polarity through all cosmic and historical process.

The dark pessimism of biblical thought, however, is attended by an even greater hope that evil, sin, and death will be destroyed in this present evil age. Out of the womb of conflict between the serpent and the seed, Satan and Yahweh, the hope

<sup>3</sup> I.B., VI, 219f.

is born that victory is possible *within* history, whereas Zoroaster taught that it is only *after* this life on earth that a virgin-born Savior (*Saoshyan*) will finally triumph over the powers of evil, when all souls pass over "the bridge of decision." Within this life the power of darkness (*Angra Mainyu* or *Ahriman*) frustrates the victory of the power of light (*Ahura Mazda* or *Ormazd*).<sup>4</sup> In biblical faith the Saviour has already crossed the Rubicon, and "the bridge of decision" is in this life. The ruler of this world has already been judged (John 12:31; 16:11).

The dualism of biblical eschatology is temporal and historical. Time itself is divided into two ages: "this age" and "the coming age" (Hebrew, *ha olam* and *ha hazzeh*; Greek, *ho aiōn* and *ho aiōn houtos*). The present evil age is transient and will be followed by a coming age that is eternal and filled with the glory of God, the former being ruled by "the god of this age" (II Cor. 4:4) and the latter by the promised Messiah.

In the last days, before the manifestation of messianic glory, the satanic powers of the present will appear in human form as the Antichrist, the one opposed to the Christ. To be sure, this belief is often expressed in powerful mythological figures, but this is necessary to express the transcendent reality. Sigmund Mowinckel makes this significant remark: "The myth is religion's authentic mode of speech, to express the truth about the invisible realities by visible media. True religion can never be *entmythologisiert*."<sup>5</sup>

#### THE RISE OF THE ANTICHRIST IDEA

The rise of the Antichrist idea was accelerated by the Hellenistic domination of Israel. Antiochus IV Epiphanes, putting himself in the place of divinity, remains the permanent prototype of all those temporal rulers who would make themselves sovereign in things spiritual. This cult of temporal sovereignty, reaching back to the ancient Egyptians and Syrians and transmitted to the West through Greco-Roman culture and civilization, has often produced spiritual convulsions among

<sup>4</sup> R. C. Zaehner, *The Dawn and Twilight of Zoroastrianism* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1961) pp. 248-264, 302-321.

<sup>5</sup> *He That Cometh*, tr. G. W. Anderson (Oxford: Blackwell, 1956), p. 262. *Entmythologisiert* (demythologized) has reference to the efforts to strip biblical thought of mythological language.

those who believe that God alone is sovereign in things spiritual.<sup>6</sup> The apocalyptic imagery necessary to veil references in times of great crisis between the temporal and the spiritual need not conceal for modern readers the profound relevance of this faith and hope to all who believe that men are pilgrims, and as pilgrims must give supreme allegiance to Him who is invisible and eternal.

A crisis among the Jews of Jerusalem made the Syrian ruler Antiochus IV Epiphanes a major prototype for the imagery of Antichrist in biblical thought.<sup>7</sup> About 175 B.C. Antiochus, attempting to Hellenize Jerusalem, found support in a quisling named Jason, the brother of the high priest Onias III. While Onias was absent Jason offered Antiochus money in order to gain the office of high priest for himself. After Jason enjoyed the office for about three years, this Erastianism backfired when a certain Menelaus offered Antiochus a larger sum of money and gained the office for himself.

Menelaus plotted the assassination of Onias to secure his position, disposed of some vessels of the temple, and soon found himself involved in a riot among the pious people. While Antiochus was in Egypt, Jason re-entered the city and drove out Menelaus. Antiochus reacted violently against such riots and revolution and adopted drastic measures against the Jews. His armies plundered the city and desecrated the temple. I Maccabees 1:46-63 describes the ordeal.

*The Visions of Daniel.* The visions of Daniel 7-12 focus attention on the figure of Antiochus. In the vision of the four beasts (7:1-28) a lion with the wings of an eagle, a bear with three ribs in his mouth, a leopard with four heads and four wings, and a beast with ten horns and iron teeth are seen. Three of the ten horns on the beast are uprooted by a little horn which sprouts eyes and a mouth speaking great things. The first three beasts are interpreted as Babylon, Media, and Persia, and the ten horns are the Seleucid kings of Syria from which Antiochus as the little horn arises. It is the hope that

6 L. Cerfau and L. Tondria, *Le Culte des Souverains* (Paris: Tournai Desclée and Co., 1957), trace the emperor cult through Oriental, Greek, and Roman civilization. The biblical material has been elaborated by David Nelson, "A Critical Study of Antichrist and Related Ideas in the New Testament", unpublished dissertation, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1955.

7 I.B., VI, 341-549.

after the rule of "time and times and half a time" (7:25, ASV), i.e., three and a half years between 168 and 165 B.C., the earthly kingdom will pass away and the messianic kingdom will come.

In the vision of the ram and the he-goat (8:1-27) Daniel sees a ram with two uneven horns butting west, north, and south, and no beast is able to resist him until a he-goat with one horn attacks and overthrows him and breaks his horns. Then the horn of the he-goat is also broken, and four horns take its place. Out of one comes a little horn which has power to spread to the south and east. This little horn exalts itself against the hosts of heaven, desecrates the sanctuary, and for three years and two months interrupts the daily sacrifice. Gabriel tells Daniel that the ram is the Medo-Persian kingdom and that the he-goat is Greece. The horn of the he-goat is Alexander the Great, the four horns that succeed him the Diadochi, and the little horn is Antiochus Epiphanes, who proscribed the temple services from 168-165 B.C.

The prophecy of the seventy weeks (9:1-27) is based on Jeremiah's prediction that Jerusalem would be desolate for seventy years (Jer. 25:11f.; 29:10). As Daniel prays, making confession of national sin and pleading for the end of desolation, the angel Gabriel appears to explain that seventy years are seventy weeks of years. The seventy weeks are divided into three groups of seven, sixty-two, and one. The seven weeks of years has reference to the forty-nine years between Zedekiah (586 B.C.) and Joshua the high priest (538 B.C.), the sixty-two weeks of years to the period between 604 B.C. (a date presumed for Joshua) and the assassination of Onias in 171 B.C., and the last week of years to the period of 171-164 B.C., when Antiochus set up the appalling abomination in the temple. The hope for God's kingdom that is to follow provides the weal in the midst of woe.

In the vision of the last days (10:1-12:13) a detailed apocalyptic passage brings history down to the time of Antiochus IV Epiphanes (10:1-11:20). Antiochus, as the contemptible fellow who follows the tax raiser (Seleucus IV), breaks the prince of the covenant by the assassination of Onias III in 171 B.C. (11:21-24). After moving against Egypt as the kingdom of the south, he returns to set himself against the holy covenant in the campaign against Jerusalem (11:25-28). The Romans as the "ships of Kittim" intervene in 168 B.C., and in chagrin Antiochus returns to punish the Jews (11:29-31).

The treatment of the Jews precipitates the Maccabean revolt, but Antiochus magnifies himself by taking titles of divinity and honoring the Olympian Zeus (11:32-39). Antiochus is able to defend himself against Ptolemy Philometer from the south, but tidings from the north force him to return to perish (11:40-45). After this a great tribulation, the resurrection, and the messianic age are expected (12:1-13).

*The Synoptic Apocalypse.* The synoptic apocalypse in Mark 13:3-37 (Matt. 24:3-44; Luke 21:7-33) fills in more details of the Antichrist idea. Since 1864, when Timothy Colani first propounded the theory of "the Little Apocalypse" in three parts (vss. 5-8, 9-13, 14-31), many New Testament critics have denied the authenticity of the Olivet discourse. This theory, however, has recently been subjected to searching scrutiny, and there is an increasing tendency to assign the teachings to our Lord rather than to the early Church.<sup>8</sup> In any case, whether from Jesus or the early Church, the importance of the passage for the developing doctrine of Antichrist will not be denied. The three acts in the apocalyptic drama also remain intact, and the Antichrist ideas may be viewed in this frame.

The first act in the drama is travail (*ödines*). The note in Mark 13:8 rightly summarizes: "this is but the beginning of the sufferings." The sojourn of sufferings, sketched in 13:5-13, is a time of woe for those who would walk in the way of the Lord, and this is indicated in both the question of the disciples and the answer of the Lord. Their question was: "Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the sign when these things are all to be accomplished" (13:4). "These things" (*tauta*) has to do with the destruction of the temple, as the beginning of a series of eschatological events, but what is meant by "the sign"? It should be noted that it is not "signs" (*sēmeia*), but sign (*sēmeion*), and this would seem to have reference to the "desolating sacrilege" in verse 14.

In answer to the question Jesus warns: "Take heed that no one leads you astray. Many will come in my name, saying, 'I am he!' and they will lead many astray" (13:5f.). "Take heed" is a part of a watch word lest the disciples be deceived

8 G. R. Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Future* (London: Macmillan, 1954); *A Commentary on Mark Thirteen* (London: Macmillan, 1957); C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), pp. 387-412; Franz Mussner, *Was lehrt Jesus über das Ende der Welt?* (Freiburg: Herder, 1958).

(13:5,9,23,33), for many false signs and claims will appear before the end. "The end is not yet" (13:7). To come in His name (*epi toi onomati mou*) means to claim to be what He is, the Messiah, and such pretenders were not unknown in the first century. Judas of Galilee was one of them, and Josephus sees a direct connection between his revolt and the destruction of the temple (*Antiquities*, 18.I.i.6). Simon Magus is described as "that power of God which is called Great" (Acts 8:10), and he also may well be considered a prototype of Antichrist. Yet "the sign" has not yet arrived.

This time of woe will also be a time of weal. Evangelism will spread in the interim: "And the gospel must first be preached to all nations" (Mark 13:10). Along with the false witnesses that come in His name (*epi toi onomati mou*, 13:6) there will also be the faithful witnesses who suffer for His name (*dia to onoma mou*, 13:13). With the warning comes the promise: "And when they bring you to trial and deliver you up, do not be anxious beforehand what you are to say; but say whatever is given you in that hour, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit" (13:11). Equipped with *kerygma* (preaching) and *pneuma* (Spirit) they are to witness and watch until the end.

A second word of weal concerns endurance. "And brother will deliver up brother to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; and you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But he who endures to the end will be saved" (13:12f.). Beyond the woe from within and from without is the promise of weal, beyond the sufferings of the messianic community is the glory of the suffering Messiah. "By your endurance you will gain your lives" (Luke 21:19). As Paul is reported: "through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22).

The second act in the synoptic apocalypse is tribulation (*thlipsis*). The act (13:14-23) has two scenes, one immediate (14-18) and the other ultimate (19:23). The immediate event is to be a thing so horrible that it is called "the appalling abomination" or "the desolating sacrilege," a term used to describe the appalling horror that gripped the people in the time of Antiochus IV Epiphanes (*shiqqutz shomem* in the Hebrew of Daniel 9:27; 11:31; 12:11). The Greek *bdelugma tēs erēmōseōs* in Mark 13:14 (cf. I Maccabees 1:54) includes all of the Antichrist ideas of desecration and idolatry accumu-

lated by the symbol, but the immediate reference apparently has to do with the Roman army.<sup>9</sup> This is clearly the understanding in Luke 21:20-24:

But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are inside the city depart, and let not those who are out in the country enter it; for these are days of vengeance, to fulfil all that is written. Alas for those who are with child and for those who give suck in those days! For great distress shall be upon the earth and wrath upon this people; they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led captive among all nations; and Jerusalem will be trodden down by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.

The culmination of the troubles in the second scene (19-23) goes beyond the events fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 66-70. C. E. B. Cranfield has suggested that "the thought here is eschatological, the final tribulation of history being in view." In the fall of Jerusalem there was a fulfillment, "but it was not a fulfillment without a remainder." He further argues: "Antichrist was indeed present in the fierce nationalism of the Jews and the pride of Rome, and thus incarnate stood 'where he ought not.' But there was more to come. The new Israel like the old would be sinful and would again and again be menaced by divine judgment, and Antichrist would again and again embody himself in proud and sacrilegious men. Thus in the crises of history the eschatological is foreshadowed. The divine judgments in history are, so to speak, rehearsals of the last judgment, and the successive incarnations of Antichrist are foreshadowings of the last supreme concentration of the rebelliousness of the devil before the End."<sup>10</sup>

In the interim between the desecration and destruction of Jerusalem, and the consummation and final judgment, false rumors will circulate about a secret second coming, but these are "false Christs and false prophets," and the elect will not be deceived by them (Mark 13:21f.). These are but the forerunners of the final Antichrist. The coming of the Christ will not be secret, and it will be the end.

The third act (13:24-30) is the *telos* (the end), and this also has two scenes (24:27, 28-30). Scene one is the gathering of the

9 Beasley-Murray, *A Commentary on Mark Thirteen*, pp. 54-72.

10 Cranfield, *op. cit.*, p. 404.

elect, *after* the tribulation and *at* the *parousia*, as in I Thessalonians 4:13-18. There is no difference in meaning between "immediately after the tribulation of those days" (Matt. 24:29) and "but in those days, after that tribulation" (Mark 13:24). It is after (*meta*) in any case, and this note of time should not be neglected by those who propound a pre-tribulation gathering ("rapture") of the saints. This event will be cosmic: "The sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken" (Mark 13:24f.). However symbolic these signs may be interpreted, it seems impossible to construe a secret second coming from the words. The event will also be the consummation: "And then they will see the Son of man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And then he will send out the angels, and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven" (13:26f.). History as we know it will come to an end, and the sojourn of the saints will be over.

The second scene (28-30) returns to the fall of Jerusalem, the shadow of events to come. G. R. Beasley-Murray aptly says: "In response to the question of the disciples (v. 4) Jesus gives two signs: the ensign of the Son of man will herald the redemption of his people. The ensign of the Son of man most probably signifies the *Shekinah* glory with which he comes. . . ."<sup>11</sup> It is more natural, however, to reject his application of the parable of the fig tree to the *parousia*, and relate it to the fall of Jerusalem. The parable interrupts the prophecy on the *parousia* (24:27, 31f.) and points back to the predictions on the fall of Jerusalem (13:14-18).

If the parable has to do with the events of A.D. 66-70 the prediction was precisely fulfilled: "Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away before all these things take place" (13:30). If it has to do with the *parousia* it not only failed to be fulfilled but also contradicts 13:32. It is much more logical to connect the "heaven" of 13:27 with the "heaven" of 13:31 so that verses 24-27, 31-37 have to do with the *parousia*, and verses 28-30 are left to be related with 14-18 to the fall of Jerusalem. Mark 13:32, applied to the *parousia*, would not contradict 13:30 applied to the fall of Jerusalem. Of the *parousia* the words are spoken: "But of that day or that hour no one knows not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father" (13:32).

11 Beasley-Murray, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

To the prophecy of the *parousia* the parable of the porter is added (13:33-37).

*The Pauline Apocalypse.* In the Pauline apocalypse in II Thessalonians 2:1-12 the role of the little horn is played by the lawless one in an apocalyptic pattern of seven stages.<sup>12</sup> About A.D. 39 or 40 the Roman Emperor Caligula attempted to put his statue in the temple of Jerusalem and to make it an object of worship (Josephus, *Antiquities*, XVIII.8.2-6; *Jewish Wars*, II.10.1-5). This added horror to the portrait of Antiochus IV Epiphanes and deepened the dismal darkness around a man who would make himself God.

The first stage of the apocalyptic drama is already at work as "the mystery of lawlessness" (2:7). There is "the mystery of godliness" made known in Jesus Christ when "he was manifested in the flesh, vindicated in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory" (I Tim. 3:16), but in opposition to this mystery is another mystery, "the mystery of lawlessness" already at work in the world.

The leavening of lawlessness is much like "the deep things (*ta batheā*) of Satan" (Rev. 2:24) in contrast with "the deep things of God" (*ta bathē*; I Cor. 2:10), like the birds (*ta peteīna*) along the path, the weeds in the field, the birds (*ta peteīna*) in the branches, and the bad fish in the sea (Matt. 13:4,26,32,48).

The second stage is the rebellion (*apostasia*, apostasy). There was a rumor that the day of the Lord, the day of judgment, had already arrived, a first-century form of "realized eschatology!" Paul warns the Thessalonians: "Let no one deceive you in any way; for that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first" (II Thess. 2:3). A falling away from the faith before the final end is taught also in the Pastoral Epistles (I Tim. 4:1-5; II Tim. 3:1-9), a characteristic of Jewish eschatology (II Esdras 5:1-13) which passed over to the early Christians (Matt. 24:10-12). This religious defection in the Church prepares the way for political perils similar to the desolating sacrilege of Antiochus IV Epiphanes.

The third stage has to do with the removal of that which restrains (*to katechon*), or the restrainer (*ho katechōn*),

12 A detailed study is B. Rigaux, *Les Epîtres aux Thessalonians* (Paris: J. Gabalda, 1956), pp. 247-280, 644-680.

and constitutes one of the most difficult passages in the New Testament (II Thess. 2:6f.). Since the time of Irenaeus of Lyon (*Adversus omnes Haereses*, IV. pref. 4; V.23.2; 25.1,3; 26.1; 28.2; 29.1-2; 30.2, 4), many interpreters have identified "that which restrains" with the Roman Empire and "he who restrains" with the Emperor, but this has been strongly rejected in modern times by Oscar Cullmann.<sup>13</sup> He rightly insists that it is absurd to trace both the restrainer and the Antichrist to the prototype of the Roman Emperor. Adopting a suggestion made by Theodore of Mopsuestia, Cullmann would make the preaching of the gospel by Christian missionaries that which restrains, and Paul the apostle would be the one restraining.

Modern dispensationalism adds a third alternative by the argument that the restrainer is the Holy Spirit, who will be removed from the world before the tribulation and the manifestation of Antichrist (*Scofield Reference Bible*, p. 1274). This precipitates the feud over the pre-tribulation rapture of the saints that has become a test of Christian fellowship among many premillennialists.<sup>14</sup>

No one of these three theories is without difficulties, and the failure to relate the passage to apocalyptic thought has led the commentators astray. It is not at all certain that "the concept of the temporary restraining of the forces of hell was given a new interpretation by the New Testament writer."<sup>15</sup> In Daniel 10:13,21 and 12:1, as in Revelation 12:7-9, it is Michael, the commander of heavenly hosts and protector of the people of God, who fights against Satan, and there is no good reason to abandon this interpretation in II Thessalonians 2:6. It was an idea familiar alike to Paul and the Thessalonians, and it seems most reasonable to assume that it came from Daniel.<sup>16</sup>

13 *Christ and Time*, tr. Floyd V. Filson (London: SCM, 1950), pp. 164-166; "Eschatology and Missions in New Testament," *The Background of the New Testament and Its Eschatology*, ed. W. D. Davies and David Daube (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), pp. 418-421; *The State in the New Testament* (London: SCM, 1957), p. 64.

14 George E. Ladd, *The Blessed Hope* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956).

15 William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), pp. 423f.

16 Ferdinand Prat, *The Theology of Saint Paul*, tr. John L. Stoddard (London: Burns, Oates, and Washbourne, 1926), I, 82f.

The fourth stage is the *parousia* of the man of lawlessness (II Thess. 2:3f.,8f.). His person and his work are a manifestation of demonic power and dominion within the framework of human history. In his person he is "the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God" (2:3f.). In the background the abominations of Antiochus IV Epiphanes and Caligula provide the political prototypes, but the title is elsewhere applied to Judas Iscariot. After the feeding of the five thousand, when the people would make Jesus a king by force, Judas Iscariot is designated "a devil" (John 6:15,70). In the upper room Satan entered into Judas after he received the morsel (John 13:27). In the high-priestly prayer Jesus says: "While I was with them, I kept them in thy name which thou hast given me; I have guarded them, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled" (John 17:12). This religious prototype, combined with the political content of former crises, helps paint the portrait of the coming son of perdition.

The work of the man of lawlessness will also be a disclosure of the demonic dimension. "The coming of the lawless one by the activity of Satan will be with all power and with pretended signs and wonders, and with all wicked deception for those who are to perish, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved" (II Thess. 2:9f.). His power, signs, and wonders are counterfeits of the Christ, "a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs which God did through him" (Acts 2:22). In the Antichrist Satan works; in the Christ God works.

The fifth stage is the *parousia* of Christ (2:1,8). *Parousia* has reference to a glorious manifestation of one whose presence was previously hidden, but there will be first a "*parousia* (coming) of the lawless one" (2:9) before "the Lord Jesus will slay him with the breath of his mouth and destroy him by his appearing and his coming" (*parousia*; 2:8). At the manifestation of the mystery of iniquity in the man of lawlessness the mystery of godliness will be manifest a second time. This will be discussed in some detail in the second part of this chapter.

The sixth stage will be the gathering of the saints (II Thess. 2:1). In Paul's first letter the promise of the *parousia* was associated with the coming of Christ *with* those saints who had

departed by death to be with the Lord and *for* those saints still alive at the time of the glorious manifestation (I Thess. 4:13-18). Dispensationalism, building on an erroneous note in the *Scofield Reference Bible* at Revelation 4:1, has reversed the order of Scripture and built on this false foundation the dogma of a pre-tribulation rapture (from the Latin translation *rapiēmur*, "shall be caught up," I Thess. 4:17). This has been so thoroughly refuted by George E. Ladd that it is not necessary to disgress further on this premillennial phenomenon that has become such a divisive issue among many conservative Christians.<sup>17</sup> It may well be designated a dispensational deviation from the plain teaching of Holy Scripture which says: "Immediately *after* the tribulation . . . they [the angels] will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (Matt. 24:29,31).

The seventh and last stage of the Pauline apocalypse is the judgment (II Thess. 2:8,12). God will not only judge the lawless one (2:8), but will also condemn the disciples of the demonic Antichrist. "Therefore God sends upon them a strong delusion, to make them believe what is false, so that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2:11f.). Their resistance to God and His Christ brings upon them the punishment of God, as in the case of Pharaoh (Exod. 4:21; 9:12; 10:20,27; 11:10; 14:4,8,17). In the second exodus the wicked are destroyed as in the first.

Resistance to men who confuse themselves with God has a glorious history among the English-speaking people. The first treatise on religious liberty in the modern world was written by Thomas Helwys, the founder of the first Baptist church on English soil. His little classic on *The Mistery of Iniquity* grasped the heart of the Antichrist idea when he told King James I: "Our Lord the King is but an earthly King, and he hath no authority as a King but in earthly causes."<sup>18</sup>

There are still those who follow the false philosophy of Thomas Erastus, expounded in his *Explicatio Gravissimae Quaestionis* (1589, E.T. *The Nullity of Church Censures*, 1659). Long before the terrors of modern totalitarianism, the *Leviathan* (1666) of Thomas Hobbes, building on Erastus, displayed the

17 Ladd, *op. cit.*

18 *The Mistery of Iniquity* (1612. London: Kingsgate, 1935), p. 69.

chains of determinism and domination by which men born to be free are kept in bondage.

*The Johannine Apocalypse.* The Johannine apocalypse depicts a dragon war between those who believed that "Jesus Christ is Lord" and those who claimed "Caesar is Lord" (Rev. 12,13). Caesar-worship developed out of the worship of Rome, and by the middle of the first century the practice was fully established. The reluctance of Augustus and Tiberius was past, and Caligula and Domitian not only accepted but demanded divine honors. Domitian was addressed as *dominus et deus noster* (our Lord and God), and he was the emperor at the time Revelation was written. Once each year each citizen was required to burn incense to Caesar and say: "Caesar is Lord." This a true Christian could not do, so he was considered a criminal worthy of death.<sup>19</sup> This dragon kingdom is unveiled in seven visions, four of the dragon and three of the beast. In the first (12:1-6) the dragon is at war with a woman in a scene in which mythological elements abound. The Greeks had a story about the birth of Apollo, and the Egyptians about Horus, very similar to this, and the travailing woman with twelve stars on her head may be related to the Zodiac. The dragon recalls the Babylon myth about Tiamat reflected in the Old Testament figures of the sea monster Leviathan (Isa. 27:1; Job 3:8;41), the land monster Behemoth (Job 40:15), and possibly Rahab (Isa. 51:9; Ps. 87:4; 89:10). Some interpreters, notably Ernst Lohmeyer and his disciple Martin Rist, reduce these visions to little more than mythology, but Oscar Cullmann is certainly right in calling these "mythological motifs" and insisting that this is not "*mythology alone*."<sup>20</sup>

The elements of historical revelation transform the mythological language by appeal to redemptive history in both the Old and New Covenants. The woman can only be the Israel of God (Isa. 66:7f.), before and after Christ, the twelve stars the twelve patriarchs (Gen. 37:9), and the child a world-redeemer identified with Jesus Christ alone whose destiny is to defeat the dragon and to rule all nations after He is "caught up to God and to his throne" (12:5; cf. Ps. 2:9 with Rev.

19 William Barclay, *Expository Times*, LXX (June 1959), 260-264.

20 Ernst Lohmeyer, *Die Offenbarung des Johannes* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 19261, and 19532); I. B., XII, 347-618; Cullmann, *The State in the New Testament*, p. 72.

3:21; 5:6; 7:10; 22:1,3; 2:27; 19:15-21). The vision is a splendid specimen of how mythological aspirations are transformed by historical revelation.

In the second vision (Rev. 12:7-9) the dragon is at war with Michael, the leader of the heavenly host and the protector of the people of God and the restrainer of demonic powers (Dan. 10:13, 21; 12:1; II Thess. 2:6f.), who is victorious over the dragon. Michael and his angels versus the dragon and his angels (Matt. 25:41) — this is the cosmic conflict. In the Old Testament Satan functions as the accuser (Zech. 3:1, Job 1) and as the tempter (I Chron. 21:1) of the saints of God, but now he is “thrown down to the earth” as a step in his defeat and destruction. A vision of this final defeat was seen by Jesus in the days of His flesh (Luke 10:18), but he is still active on earth (Eph. 6:10-12).

In the third vision (12:10-12) the dragon is at war with the Lamb, and a song of weal mingled with woe is heard. The singers may be angels, but they are more likely the martyrs (Rev. 6:10). Massey H. Shepherd, Jr., makes the striking suggestion that the Johannine apocalypse follows the paschal liturgy, and that this song is related to “the Gospel proclamation of the triumph of Christ over Antichrist.”<sup>21</sup> They sing (ASV):

Now is come the salvation, and the power, and the Kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ:

for the accuser of our brethren is cast down,  
who accuseth them before our God day and night.

And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb,  
and because of the word of their testimony;

and they loved not their life even unto death.

Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and ye that dwell in them.

Woe for the earth and for the sea:  
because the devil is gone down unto you,  
having great wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time.

In the fourth vision (12:13-17) the dragon is at war with the saints, and the scene is a wilderness. In 12:6 “the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which to be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days.” This is the same as the “short time” of the dragon and the “time, and times, and half a time” (12:14) in which the woman will be nourished. The woman who flees into

21 *The Paschal Liturgy and the Apocalypse* (Richmond, Va.: John Knox, 1960), p. 96.

the wilderness represents the elements of a "desert eschatology," while the water monster is a figure from "swamp eschatology" — much as there are two accounts of creation, one desert (Gen. 2:4b-4:2b) and the other swamp (Gen. 1:1-2:4a).

In the vision the woman, now on earth rather than in heaven (12:1,13,16), flees by the help of God (Exod. 19:4; Isa. 40:31) into the wilderness as the new and continuing Israel of God (cf. Gal. 4:24-26). Her enemy the sea monster (cf. Ezek. 29:3; 32:2f.; Ps. 74:13ff.; Isa. 27:1), yet to be identified on earth, fails by a flood to destroy the woman, so he makes war on Christians, her children (12:17; cf. 6:11; 14:12), for the familiar three and a half years (Dan. 7:25; 12:7; Rev. 11:2). The cosmic canvas is now ready to reveal the earthly assistant and agent of "that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world" (Rev. 12:9).

In the fifth vision (13:1-4) a beast arises to dominate "the whole earth." He comes up out of the abyss (11:7) or the sea (13:1); although he is described in language associated with Antiochus IV Epiphanes, he is identified with the power of Rome (ch. 17), and his authority is derived from the dragon. His wound recalls the myth that arose about Nero, who committed suicide in A.D. 68; rumors were rampant that he was either in hiding and would appear again leading the Parthians or that he was dead and would be restored to life (*Sibylline Oracles*, 4,5,8). Christians believed he would be the Antichrist, the very incarnation of Beliar (*Ascension of Isaiah*, 4:1-14). His worship, directed to Domitian (who was believed by many to be Nero *redivivus*), brings the developing practice of Caesar-worship into a sharp crisis for the Christians who believed that Jesus alone should receive such devotion.

In the sixth vision (Rev. 13:5-10), in which the first beast appears as the antagonist of God, the problem of authority arises. Modern totalitarianism has confronted men with the question of political absolutism in an acute way, and no writer has thrown more light into this dark domain than Oscar Cullmann.<sup>22</sup> Cullmann's contention that *exousiai* (authorities) in the New Testament always has reference to angel powers, good or bad, that stand behind the state, opens up a new ap-

22 See the significant summary in Cullmann, *The State in the New Testament*, pp. 95-114. Also G. B. Caird, *Principalities and Powers* (Oxford University Press, 1956); Clinton D. Morrison, *The Powers That Be* (London: SCM, 1960).

proach to the threat of secular tyranny in our time, and Revelation 13:5-10, despite the bewildering symbolism, is here of unusual importance.

Two types of authority are displayed. The first is demonic, mentioned in 13:2 where the dragon gives to the beast "his power and his throne and great authority" and in 13:4 when the dragon is worshipped because "he had given his authority to the beast." In opposition to and sovereign over this demonic authority is the divine authority from God, for not even the blasphemer has authority unless it is "allowed" by God (13:5). It is God who ultimately gave the beast "authority" over those whose names have "not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that was slain" (13:7f.). Satan has authority through the beast only over those who have rejected the direct authority of God.

In the seventh and final vision of the dragon kingdom (13: 11-18) a land monster appears in the service of the sea monster, a survival of the Behemoth and Leviathan symbolism. The second beast, the "false prophet" (16:13; 19:20; 20:10) who persuades the people to worship the first beast, represents the highly organized imperial cult that promoted Caesar-worship by pseudo-miracles. For Christians who believed that Jesus is Lord, not Caesar, three cultic ideas were crushing.<sup>23</sup> One was devotion to Caesar's image, an act interpreted as literal worship of the Emperor (*Tacitus, Annales*, XV.29).

The second was the mark, a sign of ownership or devotion (cf. 7:3), and those who received it were doomed for destruction in the last day (19:20). Eusebius describes the social boycott in Lyons, written after the persecution of A.D. 177, as a time when the devil "endeavored in every manner to practice and exercise his servants against the servants of God, not only shutting us out from houses and baths and markets, but forbidding us to be seen in any places whatever" (*H.E.*, V.1.5).

The third was the number of the beast. The problem involves the practice called *hisopsephia*, the use of letters for numerals. Irenaeus followed the reading 616 and proposed the notorious Gaius Caesar (*Gaios Kaisar*), but most interpreters follow the stronger reading 666 and arrive at Nero Caesar (*Nerōn Kaisar*) by the transliteration of the Greek letters into Hebrew

23 For detailed documentation see William Barclay, *Expository Times*, LXX (July 1959), 292-296.

letters. The result:  $\beth = 50 + \aleph = 200 + \aleph = 6 + \aleph = 50 + \aleph = 100 + \aleph = 60 + \aleph = 200 = 666$ . Thus Domitian is identified as Nero *redivivus* by taking the Greek letters of the Latin spelling and turning them into Hebrew letters!

### THE RELEVANCE OF THE ANTICHRIST IDEA

After the rise and development of the Antichrist symbol, its relevance in threats against the Lordship of God as fully revealed in Jesus Christ becomes evident in Holy Scripture and in the later history of the Church. The recapitulation and reinterpretation in the Johannine Epistles and Gospel have a relevance for our time far beyond that realized by the barren rationalism so characteristic of much of our modern religious thought. Even the literalism of the conservative protest against mythological thinking participates in this deadly abstraction.

*In Biblical Theology.* The threat of Antichrist was discerned in the Gnostic denial that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh. II John 7 warns: "For many deceivers have gone out into the world, men who will not acknowledge the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh; such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist. Look to yourselves, that you may not lose what you have worked for, but may win a full reward. Any one who goes ahead and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God; he who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. If any one comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into the house or give him any greeting; for he who greets him shares his wicked work."

This threat indicates that the time of Antichrist has arrived, and those who forsake the fellowship of the incarnation give evidence that they belong to this diabolical distortion of true doctrine. The elder exhorts: "Children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come; therefore we know that it is the last hour. They went out from us (*ex hēmōn*), but they were not of us (*ex hēmōn*); for if they had been of us (*ex hēmōn*), they would have continued with us (*meth hēmōn*); but they went out, that it might be plain that they all are not of us" (*ex hēmōn*) (I John 2:18f.). The play on the phrase *ex hēmōn* is apparently intended to indicate the two types of believers, the temporary and permanent, the superficial and the genuine. Their denial of the incarnation and departure from the fellowship designate

them as deceivers. "Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son. No one who denies the Son has the Father. He who confesses the Son has the Father also" (I John 2:22f.).

These antichrists are the children of the devil and do the works of the devil. Their unbelief is expressed in unrighteousness. "He who commits sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil . . . . By this it may be seen who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not do right is not of God, nor he who does not love his brother" (I John 3:8,10).

The test of Antichrist is the incarnation of the Christ. Even those who proclaim a gospel with effervescent enthusiasm are nevertheless antichrists if they deny the incarnation of the Son of God. There are two spirits that may inspire, that of truth and that of error, and there are false prophets as well as the true.

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are of God; for many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit which confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit which does not confess Jesus is not of God. This is the spirit of antichrist, of which you heard that it was coming, and now it is in the world already.

Little children, you are of God, and have overcome them; for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. They are of the world, therefore what they say is of the world, and the world listens to them. We are of God. Whoever knows God listens to us, and he who is not of God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error (I John 4:1-6).

He who turns away from the Son turns away from life. "And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who has not the Son has not life" (I John 5:11f.). A clear distinction must be made between the brother who has a moral lapse and the brother who commits this mortal sin by a total renunciation of Jesus Christ. "If any one sees his brother committing what is not a mortal sin, he will ask, and God will give him life for those whose sin is not mortal. There is sin which is mortal; I do not say that one is to pray for that" (I John 5:16).

The mark of this mortal sin, the sin for which prayer is not requested, was perhaps burning incense to the image of Caesar and renouncing the Lordship of Jesus Christ. It was to say *Kurios Kaisar* (Caesar is Lord) and deny *Kurios Jésous* (Jesus is Lord). With these blunt and brief words I John closes: "Little children, keep yourselves from idols" (5:21). What could be more relevant to an age in which temporal sovereignty, manifested in religious tyranny and political absolutism, threatens to lead people to deny the Lordship of God made known when Christ became flesh?

Thus far the discussion has been for the most part confined to the biblical basis for the Antichrist eschatology, but the principle of this demonic power has been discerned at many points in the Christian struggle against godless opponents, religious distortion, and corruption.

*In Historical Theology.* The Apostolic Fathers found guidance in the biblical prophecies thus far reviewed. In the *Didache*, the earliest writing outside the New Testament on church order, a stirring contrast between the *parousia* of Antichrist and Christ appears as a conclusion (16:1-8). The author of the *Epistle of Barnabas* believes "the final stumbling block has appeared" in the effort to rebuild the temple (4:3), and this is supported by a review of the Antichrist prophecies.

Irenaeus of Lyon (c. 130-200), the most important biblical theologian in the second century, had a robust millenarian eschatology, despite his false identification of the restrainer, in which Antichrist appears as the recapitulation of all evil even as Christ is the recapitulation of all good (*Adversus omnes Haereses* IV. Pref. 4; V. 23.3; 25.1, 3ff.; 26.1;28.2; 29.1-2; 30.1., 4). His whole system reflects the eschatological liturgy so deeply rooted in the "apostolic tradition" of the early church.<sup>24</sup> It may be that present re-evaluations of the importance of Irenaeus will help halt the de-eschatologizing tendencies of today.<sup>25</sup>

Hippolytus of Rome (c. 170-c. 236), so crucial in importance for the reconstruction of the ancient liturgy, wrote a commentary on Daniel and a separate work on the Antichrist, and this theme remains important for other Greek Fathers before

<sup>24</sup> Shepherd, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

<sup>25</sup> John Lawson, *The Biblical Theology of Saint Irenaeus* (London: Epworth, 1948); Gustaf Wingren, *Man and the Incarnation*, tr. Ross Mackenzie (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1959).

the eschatological eclipse that came with the establishment of Christianity as the state religion.<sup>26</sup>

With the cessation of persecution the references to the Antichrist image usually have little relation to the historical situation until toward the end of the early Middle Ages, when the German monks Rupert of Deutz (c. 1070-1129) and Gerhoh of Reichersberg (1093-1169) both preached a theology of God's judgment on corruption, the latter writing a penetrating work, *De Investigatione Antichristi* (c. 1161), in which he expounded his ideas on schism and called for a clearer definition of the spheres of papal and imperial power.

At the beginning of the high Middle Ages an Italian named John of Flora (c. 1132-1202), dividing history into three ages according to the three persons of the Trinity, wrote a commentary on Revelation which later led some of the Spiritual Franciscans to identify themselves with the Spiritual Church (*Ecclesia Spiritualis*) of the third age and to compare the Pope with the Antichrist. Peter John Olivi (c. 1248-98), a Spiritual Franciscan in France, at first identified the papal institution with Antichrist and later with Pope John XXII himself. Some Spiritual Franciscans found the figure of the Antichrist in Emperor Frederick II (1194-1250), the violent enemy of the papacy, and after his death they looked for him to return.

In the late Middle Ages the doctrine of "lordship" or "dominion," divine and civil, became the title of two famous books, *De Dominio Divino* and *De Civili Dominio* by John Wycliffe (c. 1329-84). Wycliffe charged that the sinful conditions of the Church made true lordship impossible and called for the confiscation of ecclesiastical property. Only those in a state of grace have true lordship. In his *De Potestate Papae* (c. 1379) he castigated the power of the Pope, and this led him to adopt the identification of the Pope with Antichrist in his *De Christo et suo Adversario Antichristo*. He compares the Pope with Christ and concludes that he is Antichrist (Ch. XI). In Bohemia John Huss (c. 1369-1415), a student of Wycliffe's works, saw the Antichrist in John XXIII, who had excommunicated the Czech reformer (*De Ecclesia*, Ch. XIII). Girolamo Savonarola (1452-98), the reformer in Florence, was excom-

26 Detailed reference to the Greek sources may be found in G. W. H. Lampe, ed., *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1961), pp. 160-162. A handy reference to Cyril of Jerusalem may be seen in *Library of Christian Classics*, IV, 147-167.

municated in 1497 by Pope Alexander VI, but he disregarded the excommunication and called for the Pope as Antichrist to be deposed.

All through the late Middle Ages before Luther, the identification of the papacy with Antichrist had been widespread, but it was the Saxon reformer who brought this view into full focus. By 1520 he was almost sure that the papacy was Antichrist, and he was indignant that the Augsburg Confession of 1530 did not include it as an article of faith. The omission was remedied in the Schmalkald Articles of 1537 which says: "The Pope is the true Antichrist who has elevated himself against Christ and above him" (II, 4). Some Protestants have seen two antichrists, one Mohammed and Islam in the East and the other the Pope and papacy in the West.

Antichrist eschatology continued as a vital part of the Protestant polemic against the papacy, but the Pietists saw the spirit of Antichrist in the dead institutionalism even of the Lutheran Church. Rationalism rejected the idea of Antichrist along with that of the devil, but modern writers such as Nietzsche, with his figure of Superman (*Uebermensch*), without pity or conscience, prepared the way for Hitler and shocked humanity out of its rationalistic repose to the realization of the depths of demonic power. Nietzsche gave *The Antichrist* (1888) as title to one of his books, and the next year lost his reason. His *The Will to Power*, so descriptive of the antichrist motif, was not published until after the mad prophet died in 1900. Cesare Borgia and Napoleon, not Jesus Christ, foreshadowed for him the Superman. He spoke the truth even in his madness, but he was on the wrong side of truth.

In modern life politics is threatened by the triumph of technology over theology, and religion has worshiped the same false god under the name of technique and methodology. One of the significant scientific thinkers of the twentieth century has stated the present situation in language relevant to both science and religion: "But when knowledge without love becomes the hireling of the resistance against love, then it assumes the role which in the Christian mythical imagery is the role of the Devil. The serpent in Paradise urges on man knowledge without love. Antichrist is the power in history that leads loveless knowledge into the battle of destruction against love."<sup>27</sup>

27 Von Weizsäker, *op. cit.*, pp. 190f.

## *Chapter Eight*

### **The Parousia**

E SCHATOLOGY SPRINGS FORTH in the deep valley between things as they are and things as they ought to be. It is at once God's judgment on sin and God's grace to the sinner, the paradox of wrath and love, the web of woe and weal. The woe of Antichrist is overcome by belief in the weal of the Christ, and the intensity of the redemptive drama stimulates visions of historical and cosmic conflict in the drama in which the saving and sovereign God delivers His people and His creation from the power of darkness. In the consummation, as in the creation, it may be said in the name of God (Isa. 45:7):

I form light and create darkness,  
I make weal and create woe,  
I am the Lord, who do all these things.

The woe of Antichrist and the weal of Christ, in historical and mythological language, mingle and clash on the boundary between the Now and the Not Yet.

In biblical thought the parousia is based on the belief that the living God, who created an order and a people in which He would dwell and be sovereign, would ultimately and finally manifest Himself in glorious majesty to redeem. The Greek word parousia expresses the form, content, and revelance of this hope to the frustrations that hinder fulfillment. Form and content are to be distinguished as that which points is distinguished from that to which we point, the former being immanent and the latter transcendent. In this twilight zone it is often difficult to escape from the deadness of literalism without taking flight into unhistorical mythology. God has put a heavenly treasure into an earthen vessel, and man must not put them asunder.

## THE DAY OF THE LORD

The first formal stage is the development of belief in the day of the Lord, a term that appears in the Old Testament twenty-eight times.<sup>1</sup> Theories about the origin of this idea illustrate how the historical and mythological may be combined in a cultic celebration of the coming kingship of God. It was W. Robertson Smith, a colorful and controversial British scholar, who found the sources in a historical battle of the Lord against His enemies. He saw the promise in Isaiah 9:4 in relation to Gideon's famous defeat of the Midianites in Judges 7. As God had done in "the day of Midian" he would do in "the day of the Lord." But it would not necessarily be in Israel's favor. "That the day of Jehovah's might is not necessarily a day of victory to Israel over foreign powers, but a day in which His righteousness is vindicated against the sinners of Israel as well as of the nations, is the characteristic prophetic idea due to Amos, and from this thought the notion of the day of judgment was gradually developed."<sup>2</sup>

A more mythological theory was developed by the German scholar Hugo Gressmann. In a beautiful book in which the elements of woe and weal (*Unheil und Heil*) are kept in almost perfect balance he attempts to account for cosmic elements in Israel's eschatology by appeal to Babylonian mythology.<sup>3</sup> Judgment will be followed by a golden age and the reign of the Lord will be established by the Messiah, Servant of the Lord and Son of Man. The day of the Lord will be nothing less than cosmic catastrophe, followed by a renewal in which the consummation will be a new creation.

The cultic theory elaborated by the Norwegian scholar Sigmund Mowinckel finds the source neither in the early period with the day of Midian nor in the contacts with Babylon. According to Mowinckel the autumn festival called the Feast of Tabernacles was an annual celebration of the enthronement of the Lord, and out of this cultic practice and belief the hope

1 H. Wheeler Robinson, *Inspiration and Revelation in the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1946), pp. 135-147. This theme has been traced through the Scriptures by Henry Buchanan, "The Day of the Lord," unpublished dissertation, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1951.

2 *The Prophets of Israel*, T. K. Cheyne (London: A. & C. Black, 1895), p. 398, n. 16.

3 *Der Ursprung der israelitisch-jüdischen Eschatologie* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1905), pp. 141-158.

of ultimate enthronement of the Lord developed. In this dramatic recital of despair and hope, history and even creation are promised an ultimate fulfillment in the purpose of God. "The epiphany of Yahweh, which will eclipse all previous ones, is depicted in the traditional colours of cosmological mythology. Sometimes the enemies are presented not so much as specific historical nations, but rather as the world power which is at once earthly and cosmic . . . ."<sup>4</sup>

To people accustomed to thinking that the autumn feast was a promise of "the day of the Lord," the time for a change of fortune in the life of Israel, the attack of Amos on such para-disaic hopes, both political and popular, was a severe shock.<sup>5</sup> According to current belief, the day of the Lord would be the day of Israel, for they were His people. To such people Amos' message of woe was like a clap of thunder on a clear day (5:18-20) :

Woe to you who desire the day of the Lord!

Why would you have the day of the Lord?

It is darkness, and not light;

as if a man fled from a lion, and a bear met him;  
or went into the house and leaned with his hand against the wall,  
and a serpent bit him.

Is not the day of the Lord darkness, and not light,  
and gloom with no brightness in it?

In Hosea the shattered picture of Paradise finds fragments of hope for a new (bethrothal) of Israel to the Lord "in that day" (2:14:23) but this will be making "the valley of Achor a door of hope" (2:15).

This message of bewildering woe, along with the hope associated with the house of David, continues in Isaiah. Along with the promise of the Lord's universal reign to Judah is the threat that "the Lord of hosts has a day," and "that day" will be "the terror of the Lord" which is "to terrify the

4 *Op. cit.*, p. 147. Norman H. Snaith, *The Jewish New Year Festival* (London: S.P.C.K., 1947), finds only a Sabbath festival in the Old Testament evidence and challenges the early date of a Coronation festival, but he agrees with Mowinckel "that the phrase 'the day of the Lord' arose out of the celebration of the autumnal harvest feast and the ideas of the change of fate which were connected with it" (p. 73).

5 Walther Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament*, tr. J. A. Baker (London: SCM, 1961), I, 364. The wider frame of the woe and weal motif may be seen in this important work (pp. 457-520).

earth" (2:12-22). The Lord will use Assyria to punish His people so that (2:17):

The haughtiness of man shall be humbled,  
and the pride of men shall be brought low,  
and the Lord alone will be exalted in that day.

God creates from the crises of history a moral community for those who renounce human pride, but He reaches His goal through events that humble. Zephaniah, with Isaiah's vision of the Holy One in the background, describes the day of woe as a day of wrath, "the day of the wrath of the Lord" (1:7f., 14f., 18; 2:2f.). The medieval hymn by Thomas of Celano (*Dies Irae, Dies Illa*) was based upon the Latin translation of Zephaniah 1:15, but the immediate historical reference was perhaps the Scythian invasion of Syria about 628-26 B.C.

Prophecies of doom become darker and more depressing as Jeremiah composed his so-called Scythian songs (4:5-31). The vivid mythological language does not obscure the reference to an actual historical threat that had to do with "that day" and "that time." The murderous invaders were perhaps the Scythians, although Aage Bentzen would be more mythological and identify the foe only with "a threatening political force from Mesopotamia" and "mysterious forces coming from the ends of the earth or 'the North.'"<sup>6</sup> Jeremiah 46:10 applies the symbol to the defeat of Pharaoh Neco of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon at the battle of Carchemish in 605 B.C.

That day is the day of the Lord God of hosts,  
a day of vengeance,  
to avenge himself on his foes.

The sword shall devour and be sated,  
and drink its fill of their blood.

For the Lord God of hosts holds a sacrifice  
in the north country by the river Euphrates.

In the prophecies concerning Judah and Jerusalem during the period 593-587 B.C. Ezekiel saw the hand of God's wrath lifted to smite, and concluded that "the day of the wrath of the Lord" had come (7:9, 19). False prophets, running like foxes among ruin, are condemned because they did not go "into the breaches," or build "up a wall for the house of Israel, that

<sup>6</sup> *Introduction to the Old Testament* (Copenhagen: G.E.C. Gad, 1948), II, 122.

it might stand in battle in the day of the Lord" (13:5). The prophecy against Egypt warns (Ezek. 30:2f):

Wail, 'Alas for the day!'  
 For the day is near,  
 the day of the Lord is near;  
 it will be a day of cloud,  
 a time of doom for the nations.

The *Lamentations* look back upon the disaster by which Jerusalem fell in 586 B.C. and express the lowest level of woe (2:22):

Thou didst invite as to the day of an appointed feast  
 my terrors on every side;  
 and on the day of the anger of the Lord  
 none escaped or survived;  
 those whom I dandled and reared  
 my enemy destroyed.

Historical circumstances condition the oracles of woe and weal, and the humiliation of national disaster turned the woe more toward those who rejoiced in Israel's calamity and encouraged Israel with a vision of the common weal in good times to come. True fasting must be united with justice and mercy if it brings delight. To those who practice pointless routine the prophet asks in the name of God (Isa. 58:5):

Is such the fast that I choose,  
 a day for a man to humble himself?  
 Is it to bow down his head like a rush,  
 and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him?  
 Will you call this a fast,  
 and a day acceptable to the Lord?

After the punishment of exile the oracles against the nations which escaped Israel's woe are warm with indignation, and pronouncements on the dread day of the Lord are heard against Egypt and all nations in general (Isa. 13:6, 9; 34:8). Edom, which escaped the disaster of 586 B.C. and gloated on Israel's fate, is the special object of woe. When Edom in turn is plundered, Obadiah sees this as an omen of the day of the Lord which will destroy all the enemies of Israel and vindicate the justice of God (15):

For the day of the Lord is near upon all the nations.  
 As you have done, it shall be done to you,  
 your deeds shall return on your own head.

In the Persian period, Malachi is milder with Edom and points to her calamity as a lesson to Israel; but before the day

of the Lord a prophet figure will arise, and Israel will be given an opportunity to repent. He is first of all called "my messenger" (*malachi*), from which the book gets its name (1:1). "Behold, I send my messenger (*malachi*) to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; the messenger (*malak*) of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?" (3:1f.). This messenger recalls "the law of my servant Moses" (4:4), "the days of old and as in former years" (3:4), and "the days of your fathers" (3:7), and perhaps has reference to the words of Exodus 23:20ff.: "Behold, I send an angel (*malak*) before you, to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place which I have prepared. Give heed to him and hearken to his voice, do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your transgression; for my name is in him. But if you hearken attentively to his voice and do all that I say, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries."<sup>7</sup>

The note at the end of Malachi identifies the messenger with Elijah *redivivus*: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes. And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the land with a curse" (4:5f.). The Jewish custom of allocating a chair for Elijah at the rite of circumcision (Gen. 17:10) grew from this belief, and it is perhaps based on Elijah's zeal for the covenant mentioned in I Kings 19:10. After the people have had opportunity to repent, the day of doom descends: "For behold, the day comes, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble; the day that comes shall burn them up, says the Lord of hosts, so that it will leave them neither root nor branch" (Mal. 4:1f.). God's act will bring woe followed by weal (3:17; 4:2f.).

In the New Testament John the Baptist is identified with the messenger (Mark 1:2; Matt. 11:10; Luke 1:17, 76; 7:27), but only in a conditional way with Elijah (Mark 9:11-13). Moses and Elijah, appearing together at the transfiguration (Mark 9:4; Matt. 17:3; Luke 9:30), are the two abiding apoc-

7 Cf. the problem raised by T. W. Manson, *The Sayings of Jesus* (London: SCM, 1949), pp. 67-69.

alyptic witnesses who are yet to appear before the great day (Rev. 11:1-13).

All nations are the object of woe in the prophecies of Joel and Zechariah. Joel is a prophet of the "day of the Lord" (1:15; 2:1, 11, 31; 3:14, cf. 3:18), for the book is dominated by this threat of woe and promise of weal. The first part (1:1-2:27) deals with the present woe of a locust swarm threatening to devastate the land, but beyond this is the promise of better times for those who fast and repent. Life is lived between "blow" (2:1, 15) and "be glad" (2:21, 23), between blowing the trumpet of alarm and a call to fast, and the gladness in God who will answer their prayers.

The second part (Joel 2:28-3:21) looks to the future of which the swarm of locusts is only a shadow. First of all God will pour out his Spirit (2:28f.), and a period of prophetic power in Israel will follow, the period for which Moses wished (Num. 11:29), for which other prophets longed (Isa. 32:15; 44:3 Ezek. 39:21), and which began at Pentecost (Acts 2). After this there will be the judgment of all nations, but Israelites who pray to God will be delivered and dwell in the holy city, the new Jerusalem (2:32; 3:16-21).

All the nations are again arraigned for judgment in an oracle at the end of the book of Zechariah (12-14). Two sieges of Jerusalem are described in apocalyptic language, the first being a forerunner of the final. The final siege will be "the day of the Lord" when "all the nations" will be gathered "against Jerusalem to battle," but the Lord will intervene and deliver Jerusalem (14:1-5). Weal will again follow woe (14:6-8), but the enthronement of the Lord at the feast of tabernacles will at last come (14:9-19). "And the Lord will become king over all the earth; on that day the Lord will be one and his name one" (14:9). In this light it is difficult to dismiss Mowinckel's detailed defense of the enthronement festival.

#### THE DAY OF THE SON OF MAN

Into this web of woe and weal John the Baptist and Jesus came, and the day of the Lord was reshaped as the day of the Son of man (Luke 17:24f.). In Q, the document believed to be behind the materials found in Matthew and Luke and not found in Mark, the woof and the warp of woe and weal are woven together in the relation of John the Baptist to Jesus.

18  
M. 12

John the Baptist, like Amos, was a prophet of woe who warned the people that God was giving a last chance for them to escape the terrible day of wrath. "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" he asked the multitude (Luke 3:7). He warned them that the axe was about to fall and the winnowing fork would soon go to work: "Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. . . . His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor, and to gather the wheat into his granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire" (Luke 3:9, 17). A baptism of fire is about to take place.

To this woe Jesus added the blessings of weal. The so-called sermon on the plain has preserved both notes in vivid contrast (Luke 6:20-26).

Blessed are you poor,  
for yours is the kingdom of God.  
Blessed are you that hunger now,  
for you shall be satisfied.  
Blessed are you that weep now,  
for you shall laugh.  
Blessed are you when men hate you,  
and when they exclude you and revile you,  
and cast out your name as evil, on account  
of the Son of man! Rejoice in that day,  
and leap for joy, for behold, your reward  
is great in heaven; for so their fathers  
did to the prophets.  
But woe to you that are rich,  
for you have received your consolation.  
Woe to you that are full now,  
for you shall hunger.  
Woe to you that laugh now,  
for you shall mourn and weep.  
Woe to you, when all men speak well of you,  
for so their fathers did to the false prophets.

That which brings woe in this present age will bring weal  
in the age to come, and that which is weal in this age brings  
woe in the age to come. "Now" is the crucial moment for  
decision.

The preaching of John and of Jesus reveals the place each occupies in the purpose of God. When the disciples of John reported "these things," i.e., the good news Jesus was preaching

alongside John's message of doom, a dialogue developed. John's question (Luke 7:18-23) was provoked by this new note of Jesus, for John had preached a "coming one" of wrath and judgment. The actions of Jesus before the answer associated Him with the promised signs of transformation in Isaiah (26:19; 29:18f.; 35:5f.; 61:1). Redemption, as well as judgment, weal, as well as woe, is on the way. Jesus

To the answer of Jesus to John (Luke 7:24-26, 28, 31-35) the identification of John is added, and Mark 1:2f. unites the "messenger" of Malachi 3:1 with the "voice" of Isaiah 40:3. Luke relates John to the present age of the law and the prophets, not to the coming kingdom. The age represented by Jesus and embodied in Him is so much greater than that represented by John that it can only be said: "I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John; yet he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he" (Luke 7:28). John represents the age that comes to an end with woe; Jesus belongs to the age of weal.

As Visitation. In the message of Jesus the movement of woe and weal takes the form of promised visitation and vindication.<sup>8</sup> They are at once the days which prophets and righteous men longed to see (Luke 10:23f.; Matt. 13:16f.), and the days when blood will be required of "this generation" (Luke 11:50; Matt. 23:36; cf. Matt. 24:34). The sevenfold woe of Matthew 23 is the expanded dirge of these days. In the Q document, Jesus' relation to the present ministry of John shifts to his future relation to the coming day of judgment (Luke 12:35-59; 13:18-30, 34f.; 14:15-27, 34f.; 16:13, 16-18; 17:22-37). Two passages are very pertinent for our understanding of the day of the Son of man.<sup>9</sup> The judgment as a coming crisis (Luke 12: 35-59) has seven parables: the marriage feast (35-38), the thief (39f.), the servant (41-46), the stripes (47f.), fire (49-53), weather (54-56), and the adversary (57-59), but it will be well for those who watch and are faithful.

In the parable of the marriage feast (cf. John 13:4f.) the knock of the master returning from the wedding may terrify the unfaithful servants, but it will be blessed for those willing

8 John A. T. Robinson, *Jesus and His Coming* (London: SCM, 1957), pp. 39f.

9 C. H. Dodd, *The Parables of the Kingdom* (London: Nisbet, 1936), pp. 154-174; Joachim Jeremias, *The Parables of Jesus*, tr. S. H. Hooke (London: SCM, 1954), pp. 38-47.

to keep the night vigil. If the parable of the ten maidens (Matt. 25:1-13) is not an expansion of this brief parable, it at least sounds the same note of warning about an unexpected judgment. F. C. Burkitt has made a suggestion about the textual reading of Matthew 25:1 which would bring the two parables into more harmony. If the maidens "went to meet the bridegroom and the bride," as some important authorities read, the parable comes more in line with the shorter form in Q as well as with other patterns of New Testament eschatology (I Thess. 4:13-18; Rev. 19:1-21), to be discussed later. The difficulties of this proposal set forth by T. W. Manson do not seem sufficient to refute Burkitt's argument.<sup>10</sup> The parable of the doorkeeper in Mark 13:33-37 has a similar warning of woe and may be another form of this parable in Q.

The parable of the thief (cf. Matt. 24:43f.) has reference to a judgment, not to the joys of the parousia and the messianic banquet, but those "ready" for the disaster of woe will not be caught unaware. In other places in the New Testament this message of woe is related to the figure of a night thief and balanced with a promise of weal to those ready in watchfulness and faithfulness (I Thess. 5:1-11; Rev. 3:1-6; 16:15; II Pet. 3:10-13). Mark 13:35f. has a parable of the master's coming with a similar motif.

In the parable of the servant (cf. Matt. 24:45-51), the possibilities of both weal and woe are open for the same servant. If he is faithful in the supervision of that entrusted to him, the judgment will be weal (41-44); but if the delay causes doubt to arise in his heart so that he becomes preoccupied and possessed of proud domination and sensual pleasure, the judgment will take him by surprise and he will be punished.

The parable of the stripes is a sharp reminder of the stewardship of knowledge and possessions. The point and poetic structure of the parable are so plain:

1. And that servant who knew his master's will,  
but did not make ready or act according to his will,  
shall receive a severe beating.  
But he who did not know,  
and did what deserved a beating,  
shall receive a light beating.
2. Every one to whom much is given,

10 Manson, *op. cit.*, pp. 243f.

of him will much be required;  
 And of him to whom men commit much  
 they will demand the more.  
 (Luke 12:47-48)

The first part makes a distinction between sins of ignorance and sins of knowledge, while the second part is a parallelism about possessions: the greater the gift the greater the responsibility.

The parable of the fire (cf. Matt. 10:34-36) speaks of the world conflagration, a conflagration of woe to be followed by a regeneration of weal (Matt. 19:28), but before this can happen Jesus must fulfill the mission of a general baptism by passing through the overwhelming waters for all (cf. Ps. 42:7; 69:2, 15; Mark 10:38). His perils will be the pangs of the new age, pangs of travail through which the disciples must also pass.

I came to cast fire upon the earth;  
 and would that it were already kindled!  
 I have a baptism to be baptized with;  
 and how I am constrained until it is accomplished!  
 Do you think that I have come to give peace on earth?  
 No, I tell you, but rather division;  
 for henceforth in one house there will be five divided,  
 three against two and two against three;  
 they will be divided,  
 father against son and son against father,  
 mother against daughter and daughter against mother,  
 mother-in-law against daughter-in-law  
 and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.  
 (Luke 12:49.)

The parable of the weather (cf. Matt. 16:2f.), following this eschatological poem, uses the cloud coming from the west as a sign of refreshing showers and the wind from the south as a sign of scorching heat. For Israel this means that the hypocrites know more about the weather than they do about the ways of God in His world of weal and woe. The time of judgment is near, but they know it not.

The parable of the adversary (cf. Matt. 5:25f.) is another last-chance appeal. A man in debt will use every persuasion to avoid prosecution and prison, so he tries to make a settlement out of court. His case is so poor that he has no prospects for success before the judge. This is Israel's predicament before God. She is hopelessly bankrupt and blind before the coming crisis of judgment. She lacks the wisdom of an insolvent

debtor. She makes no effort to square things with God on the way to judgment, so the last peturah must be paid.

Recent disasters are added by Luke as lessons for those who refuse to repent in the interim of grace before doom descends (Luke 13:1-5). The poor Galileans before Pilate and the eighteen victims on which the tower of Siloam fell (cf. Josephus, *War*, II. 175ff.; *Ant.* XVIII. 60ff., 85ff.) were no more to be pitied than unrepentant Israel. As "a fig tree planted in a vineyard," bearing no figs, would be given one more year of grace to become fruitful, so would Israel. If not, the axe will fall (Luke 13:6-9). The oracle of the Wisdom of God (Luke 11:49-52, 13:34-35; cf. Matt. 23:34-38) is an appropriate weal for Israel's woe (cf. II Esdras 1:28-33):

I will send them prophets and apostles,  
some of whom they will kill and persecute,  
that the blood of all the prophets,  
shed from the foundation of the world,  
may be required of this generation,  
from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zachariah,  
who perished between the altar and the sanctuary. . . .

Yes, I tell you, it shall be required of this generation.

Woe to you lawyers!  
for you have taken away the key of knowledge;  
you did not enter yourselves,  
and you hindered those who were entering (Luke 11:49-52).

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem,  
killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to you!  
How often would I have gathered your children together  
as a hen gathers her brood under her wings,  
and you would not!

Behold, your house is forsaken.

And I tell you, you will not see me until you say,  
'Blessed be he who comes in the name of the Lord'

(Luke 13:34f.; cf. Ps. 118:26).

A second eschatological poem, which speaks of "the days of the Son of man," is given by Luke in 17:22-30. There are, in fact, three decisive days: the days of the Son of man (22-24), the days of Noah (26f.), and the days of Lot (28-30).<sup>11</sup> There was opportunity to repent in the days of Noah, but routine indifference in daily life crushed concern. The same was true

<sup>11</sup> T. Francis Glasson, *The Second Advent* (London: Epworth, 1945), pp. 83-88. The Third and Revised Edition of this work (1963) did not arrive in time to make use of it.

in the days of Lot, when fire and brimstone fell on the people of Sodom, as when the flood had descended on the generation of Noah. As they were destroyed by flood and fire, so the time is about to strike in the days of the Son of man. Soon hopeless people will be longing for "one of the days of the Son of man," one of the days when there was a chance to repent, but it will be too late. To the two strophes on the days of Noah and the days of Lot the days of the Son of man are added.

Luke adds the reminder, "but first he must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation" (17:25), but this is not part of the poem. It is later understood that the baptism of death must come before the baptism of fire. Other sayings added by Luke have reference to the same day of judgment and woe, not the weal of the *parousia*. The housetop saying (17:31) would be meaningless in reference to the *parousia*. Why would one run to get his goods if it were the *parousia*? It clearly has to do with the destruction of Jerusalem, even though Mark 13:14-16 has put it in an apocalyptic setting. The Lot's wife saying (17:31), linked to the Lot strophe (17:28), fits the picture of Jerusalem's woe also. The life saying (Luke 17:33; cf. Matt. 10:39, Mark 8:35, John 12:25) is formless, an ethical teaching appearing in any context because it is a timeless truth requiring no form or frame of reference.

The parable of the night (Luke 17:34-36, long form) continues the call of repentance before the day of judgment, despite the fact that Matthew 24:40f. has omitted Luke 17:36 and put this picture of judgment in a *parousia* frame. In the original setting it is the picture of a household with the master and his wife in bed, the two maidservants are at the handmill grinding flour for the next day's bread, and their husbands, the two menservants, are in the field "keeping watch over their flock by night" (cf. Luke 2:8).<sup>12</sup> The day of judgment descends! One is destroyed and another left! So it will be in that dark night when the day of the Son of man breaks on a people unprepared.

This same principle of the destruction of the wicked and the sparing of the righteous is found frequently in an apocalyptic setting in Matthew's Gospel.<sup>13</sup> In the parables of the Kingdom it is the evildoers as weeds (Matt. 13:40-43) or as bad

12 Manson, *op. cit.*, p. 146.

13 Dodd, *op. cit.*, pp. 146-153; Jeremias, *op. cit.*, pp. 47-51.

fish (13:47-49) who are destroyed, and the righteous as wheat and good fish remain to reign in the manifest kingdom (cf. Matt. 24:40f.). The pattern of historical judgment, woe and weal, persists in the apocalyptic and ultimate *parousia*. Prophetic and apocalyptic eschatology are different, one within and the other on the boundary and beyond history, but the pattern of weal and woe prevails in both. The analogy of Noah is always applied: "Only Noah was left, and those that were with him in the ark" (Gen. 7:23). Luke 17:37 (Matt. 24:28) is a formless saying that may have been applied to the fall of Jerusalem in its original setting, but Matthew has again given it an apocalyptic frame.<sup>14</sup>

After the double parable (Luke 19:11-27), in which the parable of the talents (Matt. 25:14-30) has been woven together with the parable of the *prince royal* (Luke 19:12, 14-15a, 27), Luke again quotes Psalm 118:26, this time in relation to the entry of Jesus into Jerusalem, either at Tabernacles or Passover. The disaster and desolation of Jerusalem is described in more detail and designated a "visitation" (19:44). This dark cloud, hanging so ominously on Luke's horizon, was backdrop for Jesus' call to repentance before the day of woe.<sup>15</sup>

*As Vindication.* The second theme associated with the day of the Son of man is one of vindication. In the parable of the unjust judge (Luke 18:1-8), the cry for vindication is voiced in view of the coming of the Son of man when the question is asked: "Will not God vindicate his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them?" And the answer is added: "I tell you, he will vindicate them speedily." To which is also added a second question: "Nevertheless, when the Son of man comes, will he find faith on earth?"

References to culmination and consummation, sufferings and glory, the passion and the *parousia*, the third day and the last day are all woven together in a pattern of woe and weal. The blooming time of Hosea's prophecy has drawn near (6:2):

After two days he will revive us;  
on the third day he will raise us up,  
that we may live before him.

<sup>14</sup> Robinson, *op. cit.*, p. 75f.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Josephus, *War*, II. 80; *Antiquities*, XVII. 299f., for the story of Archelaus, after the death of Herod the Great.

With a mysterious message as an echo of the ancient hope of vindication, Jesus answered the warning of the Pharisees, when they spoke of Herod's threat to kill Him (Luke 13:32f.) : "Go and tell that fox, 'Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I finish my course. Nevertheless, I must go on my way today and tomorrow and the day following; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish away from Jerusalem.' "

The note of culmination is particularly pronounced in the predictions and sayings of the passion in the Gospel of Mark<sup>16</sup>  
 As one reads the first group of five conflict stories (2:1-3:6; cf. 11:27-33, 12:18-37) in the light of Q it is impressive to note that the bridegroom saying of 2:20, so crucial in the development of the forty-hour fast in Lent, speaks not of Jesus' return but of his removal, not of the parousia but of the passion.  
 The third day is the day of vindication in all three of the passion predictions (8:31; 9:31; 10:34). The first prediction draws a distinction between those on the side of man, represented by Peter in his opposition to the passion of Christ, and those on the side of God, represented by Jesus as He identifies Himself with the coming Son of man. After the Great Confession (8:29), followed immediately by the seventh saying on the messianic secret (8:30), Jesus speaks plainly of His messianic consciousness, first indicated at the beginning of the Gospel of Mark (1:7). Out of the mysterious depths of His own filial relation to God, He declares Himself the Son of man designate (8:31): "And he began to teach them that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again."

The second prediction, made on the way through Galilee, repeats the first proclamation, but this time the satanic blindness, at first made manifest in Peter, now settles on the whole group (8:31f.). Luke 9:44 is pronounced with emphasis when Jesus says: "Let these words sink into your ears; for the Son of man is to be delivered into the hands of men." The meaning was even hidden (9:45): "But they did not understand this saying, and it was concealed from them, that they should

16 R. H. Lightfoot, *The Gospel Message of St. Mark* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1950), pp. 31-47.

not perceive it; and they were afraid to ask him about this saying" (cf. Isa. 6:9f.; Mark 4:12; Matt. 13:14f.; Luke 8:10; John 12:40; Acts 28:26f.).

The third prediction, made on the road to Jerusalem, first states that the place of the passion is to be Jerusalem, with many more details added, such as the reference to the Gentiles and the actions at the trial. Endless discussion has ensued as to whether these must be regarded as statements after the events took place (*vaticinia ex eventu*); but the more one ponders the person of our Lord the less one is impressed with these pontifications as to what Jesus could or could not know before his crucifixion. This is no appeal for omniscience, but a human mind in full fellowship and in hypostatic union with God is a (bit) beyond the bounds of ordinary human knowledge. This primer of the passion is not so easily excised. R. H. Lightfoot, with simple but acute insight, has pointed out that the word "cross," until chapter 15 where it is found ten times, is mentioned only once, and that in reference to the disciples (Mark 8:34).<sup>17</sup> This would be almost incredible if all the suffering sayings were *vaticinia ex eventu*.

In addition to the three predictions of the passion there are three important passion sayings (9:9-12; 10:38-40; 10:45). The first draws a distinction between the passion of Jesus and the passion of John. After the transfiguration, "as they were coming down from the mountain, he charged them to tell no one what they had seen, until the Son of man should have risen from the dead. So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what the rising from the dead meant" (9:9f.). In answer to the question about Elijah coming first, Jesus joins to the prophecy about Elijah the prophecy of the Suffering Servant (Mal. 4:5f.; Isa. 53:3). The conflict and coming of Elijah are related as the sufferings and glory of the Son of man. John has appeared in the role of Elijah in conflict: "But I tell you that Elijah has come, and they did to him whatever they pleased, as it is written of him" (9:13; cf. I Kings 19:2, 10). The passion of John has become the prelude to the passion of the Son of man, as the glory of the Son of man is the promise of the coming of Elijah.

The second saying unites the cup of suffering to the baptism

17 *Ibid.*, p. 36.

of death (Mark 10:38-40).<sup>18</sup> In the Old Testament many there were who, sharing one life, drank the cup of sorrow (Ps. 75:8; Isa. 51:17-19; Jer. 49:12; Lam. 4:21; Ezek. 23:31-33), and the overwhelming waters of death were a deep dread (Ps. 18:16; 42:7; 69:2, 15; 124:4f.; Isa. 43:2); but sorrow and death never met in a night so dark as when the one true man, as truly the Son of God, voiced the words of Psalm 42:6: "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death" (Mark 14:34). Three times in the dramatic darkness of Gethsemane He prayed that the hour might pass from Him and that the cup might be removed, but it was the will of His Father that He should drink the cup and pass through the waters — for us! (Mark 14:32-42; Matt. 26:36-46; Luke 22:40-46).

The third saying is the famous ransom passage (Mark 10:45) that has been so influential in discussions on the death of Christ.<sup>19</sup> The Son of man is a servant who "came not to be served but to serve" (45a), and Friedrich Nietzsche is correct in seeing this teaching as a threat to his superman philosophy that led him to boast in Antichrist. As a sacrifice the Son of man fulfilled the role of the Suffering Servant who made "himself an offering for sin" (Isa. 53:10), so that He gave "his life as a ransom for many" (45b). The "ransom for many" (*lutron anti pollōn*) makes the death of the Son of man a substitution of the one for the many, "as a ransom for all" (*antilutron huper pantōn*), according to I Timothy 2:6. This definitely describes the Son of man in the role of the Suffering Servant who "has borne our griefs," on whom the Lord has laid "the iniquity of us all," "stricken for the transgression of my people," and who made "many to be accounted righteous; and he shall bear their iniquities" (Isa. 53:4ff., 8, 11).

The role of the Suffering Servant oscillates from the corporate to the individual, from the many to the one, from Israel to Israel's representative, from the saved community to the saving Christ, and the concept of the Suffering Servant of

18 Herman L. Strack and Paul Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrash* (München: C. H. Beck, 1922), I, 836ff. Vincent Taylor, *Jesus and His Sacrifice* (London: Macmillan, 1939), pp. 97-99.

19 *Ibid.*, pp. 99-105; William Manson, *Jesus the Messiah* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1943), pp. 131-134.

Isaiah has merged with the glorious Son of man in Daniel.<sup>20</sup> Jesus was the Servant of the Lord designate as He was the Son of man designate.

The passion narrative in Mark (14:1-16:8), along with the controversy speeches (2:1-3:6; 11:27-33; 12:13-44), has been looked upon as the climax of the primitive conception of Christ's death throughout Christian history, but modern *Formgeschichte* (form criticism) has given it a new impetus, especially since Martin Albertz published *Die synoptischen Streitgespräche* (*The Synoptic Controversy Speeches*) in 1921, and Georg Bertram *Die Leidensgeschichte Jesu und der Christuskult* (*The Passion Narrative of Jesus and the Cult of Christ*) in 1922.

Two passages in the passion narrative are of special significance as passion sayings of Jesus. The first is the prophecy of the betrayal (Mark 14:21) at the last supper (14:17-21), in which the immediate and ultimate meaning of the death of Christ are distinguished. Immediately it means the betrayal by one of the twelve, but ultimately it was the fulfillment of that which was "written," perhaps in Psalm 41:9. The second passage is in the prayer of Gethsemane (14:32-42), especially the words of Psalm 42:6 already mentioned. His death is both dramatic (the three prayers) and decisive ("the hour"), and by His death a new perspective of history emerges. The passion is now the center of history.

The vindication of the Son of man on the third day is not complete until His vindication on the last day.<sup>21</sup> His sufferings are followed by glory, His passion with *parousia*, His culmination with consummation. Passion sayings alone leave us with much to look "up to," but nothing to look "forward to"; parousia sayings alone leave much that is future but little that is present. It was Paul more than any other who laid down the pontoon bridge of the present to connect the passion that is past to the parousia that is future. The Q document speaks only of judgment, never of the glory of the Son of man (Luke

20 C. R. North, *The Suffering Servant in Deutero-Isaiah* (London: Oxford University Press, 1948); H. H. Rowley, *The Servant of the Lord and Other Essays on the Old Testament* (Lutterworth, 1952), pp. 1-57; Norman K. Gottwald, *A Light to the Nations* (New York: Harper, 1959), pp. 413-426.

21 The Lord makes His glory known on "the third day" in Exod. 19:11-16.

6:22; 7:34; 9:58; 11:30; 12:8, 10, 40; 17:22, 24, 26, 30). The lightning of Luke 17:24 and the revelation of Luke 17:30 may suggest glory to those acquainted with the glory motif, but they more likely have reference to the suddenness and secrecy attached to the coming day of judgment.

The debate over the glory of the Son of man has been prolonged in New Testament study.<sup>22</sup> A survey indicates that the weight of evidence points not to Gnosticism but to Judaism as the source of the symbol. Within the fold of Judaism three sources have been suggested, and around these the "schools" of thought cluster. One group, of which Rudolph Otto is a well-known representative, thinks that Jesus Himself believed He was the Son of man designate or elect who was described in the Similitudes of Enoch (I Enoch 37-71).<sup>23</sup> A second group is best represented by G. H. Duncan, who teaches that the source is to be found in the prophetic Son of man mentioned nearly a hundred times in the book of Ezekiel (2:1, etc.).<sup>24</sup> The third group finds the source in Daniel, and T. W. Manson has given adequate statement of this view.<sup>25</sup>

The three pivot passages in Mark seem to sustain the belief that Jesus used the term "Son of man" as it appears in Daniel 7:13f.:

I saw in the night visions,  
and behold, with the clouds of heaven  
there came one like a son of man,  
and he came to the Ancient of Days  
and was presented before him.  
And to him was given dominion  
and glory and kingdom,  
that all peoples, nations and languages  
should serve him;  
his dominion is an everlasting dominion,  
which shall not pass away,  
and his kingdom one  
that shall not be destroyed.

22 The best brief guides to this complex problem may be found in T. W. Manson, *The Teaching of Jesus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1931) pp. 211-236, and A. J. B. Higgins, "Son of Man — Forschung Since 'The Teaching of Jesus,'" *New Testament Essays*, ed. A. J. B. Higgins (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1959), pp. 119-135.

23 R. Otto. *The Kingdom of God and the Son of Man*, tr. Floyd V. Filson and Bertram Lee Woolf (London: Lutterworth, 1938).

24 G. H. Duncan, *Jesus, Son of Man* (New York: Macmillan, 1947).

25 *The Sayings of Jesus.*

In Daniel 7:27 it is said that this kingdom "shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High," but this is a typical Hebrew way of oscillating between the individual and the group (cf. Gen. 1:27). The one stands for the many and the many for the one.

The first passage is Mark 8:38: "For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." The relation between the first person ("of me and of my words") and the third person ("when he comes in the glory of") is another example of Hebraic oscillation between the individual and the group. The Christ and the elect community will share the glory of the Father. "To speak of himself directly as coming in the glory of his Father would be to lay aside his messianic veiledness: to speak of the Son of man without expressly identifying him with himself was more consonant with the messianic secret — it revealed and yet at the same time concealed."<sup>26</sup> In this veiled way He identified Himself with the Son of man who is to come "in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." With this the parallels in Matthew (16:27) and Luke (9:26) agree, except that Matthew stresses that He is "about" (*mellei*) to come and, according to Psalm 62:12, "he will repay every man for what he has done."

The coming of the Son of man is linked with the coming of the kingdom (Mark 8:38-9:1), and it is difficult to sustain H. B. Sharman in his flight of eloquence which asserts that "the Son of man has no kingdom and the Kingdom of God has no Son of man."<sup>27</sup> Here, as in Daniel 7:13f., the coming of the Son of man and the coming of the kingdom of God are inseparable. In discussing the kingdom of God it has already been said that the kingdom of God came "in power" (*en du-namei*) at the transfiguration (cf. II Pet. 1:16-18), but the glory of the Son of man was seen only in vision (*ophthē*, Mark 9:4).

The second passage is Mark 13:26. After the tribulation, followed by such cosmic signs as those described in Isaiah 13:10 and 34:4, all people, not just the disciples (*opsontai*, "they

26 C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Gospel According to Saint Mark* (Cambridge: Camb. University Press, 1959), p. 285.

27 *Son of Man and Kingdom of God* (New York, Harper, 1944), p. 89.

will see"), will witness "the Son of man coming in clouds with great power and glory" (*meta dunameōs pollēs kai doxēs*). The power and the glory will be seen by all, and the angels with whom He comes will "gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth" (13:27).

The third passage is Mark 14:62; and there is no doubt that it is a conflation of Psalm 110:1 and Daniel 7:13. There is plenty of doubt and debate as to the correct interpretation. One group interprets the passage as two parallel expressions having to do with one event, the exaltation of the Son of man.<sup>28</sup> Attention is called to the fact that in Daniel 7:13 the Son of man "came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him," and a detailed study is made of the parallels. At first reading this looks impressive, but it breaks down under close examination. Mark has already applied the phrase to "the Son of man coming in clouds with great power and glory" (13:26); and it is not likely that he has changed in 14:62, although the same passage may be applied to either the *parousia* or the passion as in the case of Zechariah 12:10 (Rev. 1:7; John 19:37). It is less likely in the same writing when one chapter follows the other, and Revelation 1:7 also speaks of "a Son of man" (1:13) "coming with clouds, and every eye will see him."

The linguistic argument is no stronger than the literary. It is true that Matthew 26:64 adds the reference to time, but this can mean either "hereafter" (*ap arti*) or "surely" (*aparti*). Luke 22:69 does say "from now on" (*apo tou nun*), but it says only that "the Son of man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God" (cf. Ps. 110:1), and no mention is made of Daniel 7:13 and "coming with the clouds of heaven." Luke clearly demonstrates that there are two separate sayings. It seems more plausible to conclude that Psalm 110:1, mentioned in all three of the Synoptic Gospels, was fulfilled at the exaltation and that Daniel 7:13f., mentioned in Mark and Matthew, will be fulfilled at the consummation. This is in harmony with other New Testament reference to the two Old Testament texts. "Also in his answer to the high priest (Mark 14:62 and parallels), Jesus distinguishes between the moments when the

28 T. Francis Glasson, *op. cit.*, pp. 63-68; John A. T. Robinson, *Expository Times*, LXVII (August 1956), 336-340; *Jesus and His Coming*, pp. 43-51.

Son of man will sit at the right hand of God and the one when he will come again on the clouds of Heaven."<sup>29</sup> The criticisms of this conclusion in the important challenge of John A. T. Robinson have at least promoted more clarity in this crucial question, but there are some passages left in the Synoptic Gospels that are not exhausted by the exaltation.

In Matthew's Gospel there are four references to the coming of the Son of man, two having to do with the judgment of Israel and two having to do with the judgment of the Gentiles. Matthew 10:23 does not use the word "glory," but it perhaps has reference to the same judgment of Israel as that mentioned later in 19:28. Since Albert Schweitzer made so much of this text, considerable discussion has centered around this passage. Matthew's mission charge (9:35-11:1) uses materials from Q and M, and this particular passage is from M (10:5-16, 23-25, 10:40-11:1). Interpreted in the present setting, the meaning follows a familiar pattern of an opportunity for Israel to repent before the judgment takes place. The fact that they did not repent and the day of doom did not descend is due to the conditional nature of the apocalyptic hope. If Israel would repent the kingdom of God would come! Israel did not repent, so the day of the Lord did not come.<sup>30</sup>

In the second reference to the judgment of Israel the disciples are promised: "Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of man shall sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matt. 19:28). The *palingenesia* (re-generation, new world) has reference to a technical term of Stoic philosophy which had reference to the new beginning in the cosmic process, but it has here been transformed by historical revelation to mean the new age of the change of fortune when the Son of man will be enthroned and Israel will be judged. It is very similar to the enthronement idea related to the day of the Lord (cf. Luke 22:29f.).

The first reference to the judgment of the Gentiles speaks of

29 Oscar Cullman, *Peter: Disciple, Apostle and Martyr*, tr. Floyd V. Filson (London: SCM, 1953), p. 201.

30 John A. T. Robinson, *Jesus and His Coming*, pp. 76, 80, suggests Jerusalem as the setting, the reign of terror before the fall of Jerusalem as the time, and "a word of the Lord" as the form, but 10:23b fits as well the earlier proclamation of Jesus. I Thess. 4:15 has a similar "word of the Lord" around A.D. 50.

"the sign of the Son of man" (Matt. 24:30): "All the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Daniel 7:13 has been united with Zechariah 12:10, 12 as in Revelation 1:7, but the sign is undefined. It could have reference to the Son of man Himself or to some supernatural event to herald His coming. The silence as to the sign has stimulated a variety of speculations.<sup>31</sup>

The second has reference to all nations in the last judgment (25:31). Matthew has made this the seventh in a collection of judgment parables (24:32-26:46), all others having some sort of parallel elsewhere. In this group the technical word *parousia* appears two of the four times it is found in the Gospels (24:3, 27, 37, 39), each time as a synonym for the day of the Son of man. The judgment and the *parousia*, the woe and the weal are now wedded! The crisis of judgment is fully united with the coming of Christ.<sup>32</sup>

The parable promises the time: "When the Son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne" (25:31). The King (25:34, 40) who conducts the judgment is the Son of man (cf. 19:28); the nations are the Gentiles (25:32); the Father is God (25:34); and the brethren are the faithful remnant of Israel (25:40, 45). There is no good reason why all the other references to the brethren in Matthew can not be so interpreted (5:22-24; 7:3f.; 12:50; 23:8).<sup>33</sup> As in Daniel 7:13f., 27, the Son of man and the saints of the Most High, the faithful remnant of Israel, are both one and many. What is done to the many is done to the one.

According to the *Mishnah*, the Feast of the New Year is a review of this type of judgment. "At four times in the year is the world judged: at Passover, through grain; at Pentecost, through the fruits of the tree; on New Year's Day all that come into the world pass before him like legions of soldiers, for it is written, *He that fashioneth the hearts of them all, that con-*

31 Wilhelm Bousset, *The Antichrist Legend*, tr. A. H. Keane (London: Hutchison, 1896), 232ff. Cyril of Jerusalem identified the sign with a cross of light which would appear in the sky (*The Library of Christian Classics*, IV, 163).

32 John A. T. Robinson, *Jesus and His Coming*, p. 20.

33 But see W. G. Kümmel, *Promise and Fulfilment*, tr. Dorothea M. Barton (London: SCM, 1957), pp. 83-96.

*sidereth all their works; at the Feast [of Tabernacles] they are judged through water.*<sup>34</sup> In Matthew 25:31-46 all nations are judged.

Part of the vindication of the Son of man is the setting of the *parousia* against the background of the passion, of relating the Son of man to the Suffering Servant. After the passion the *parousia* belongs to the consummation of history, not to the center. The passion of the Son of man is the center from which the creation and the consummation, as the beginning and the end of sacred history, are viewed in a new light. It is the shift of the ages that makes the fundamental difference between Judaism, in which there is only one appearing of the Messiah, and post-passion and post-Pentecost Christianity, which teaches two appearings.<sup>35</sup>

The relation between the sufferings of Jesus and the glory, the passion and the parousia, is identical with the relation of Jesus to the kingdom. "In the ministry of Jesus the Kingdom has not yet come, but is on its way and (breaking in,) proleptically active in his proclamation and healings. So also Jesus is not yet the glorified Son of man. He has not yet been brought near to the ancient of days and received the everlasting dominion and the Kingdom that shall not be destroyed. Between Jesus and the fulfilment of Daniel's vision there stands the decisive event through which God is to inaugurate the Kingdom — the cross."<sup>36</sup> 214

The Gospel of Mark portrays the polarity between passion and *parousia* with singular power, separating the two events to make possible that later interim for the progress of the gospel. In the first half (1:1-8:30) the messianic secret slips out seven times (1:25, 34, 44; 3:12; 5:43; 7:36; 8:30), and in the second half (8:31-16:8), seven times the messianic sufferings are announced, three times as predictions (8:31; 9:31; 10:33) and three times as sayings (9:9-12; 10:38-40; 10:45) before the seventh which is passion narrative itself. In the first part He focuses on the passion of John, with His "after me" (1:7),

<sup>34</sup> *Rosh ha-Shana*, 1.2, tr. Herbert Danby (Oxford: Clarendon, 1933), p. 188.

<sup>35</sup> Oscar Cullman, *Christ and Time*, tr. Floyd V. Filson (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1950), p. 82; Reginald H. Fuller, *The Mission and Achievement of Jesus* (London: SCM, 1954), pp. 95-108.

<sup>36</sup> Fuller, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

and in the second part on the passion of Jesus, with his "after me" (8:34).<sup>37</sup>

### THE DAY OF JESUS CHRIST

The third stage of "the day" is "the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 1:8). At times it is called simply "the day" (I Cor. 3:13; Heb. 10:25), "that day" (I Thess. 5:4; II Tim. 1:12, 18; 4:8), "the day of wrath" (Rom. 2:5), "the day of judgment" (I John 4:17; II Pet. 2:9; cf. Matt. 10:15), "the day of God" (II Pet. 3:12), and "the day of redemption" (Eph. 4:30); the new perspective, reinterpreted in the light of belief in Jesus Christ as Lord, became "the day of the Lord" (I Thess. 5:2; II Thess. 2:2), meaning Jesus, and more specifically "the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 1:8), "the day of the Lord Jesus" (I Cor. 5:5; II Cor. 1:14), "the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6), and "the day of Christ" (Phil. 1:10; 2:16). It was the application of developing Christology, by which the conviction of Jesus Christ as Lord (Phil. 2:10) became established, that transformed the day of the Son of man in eschatology to the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. The problem is the same and the process is parallel in Christology or eschatology.

*As a Historical Event.* With great effort, and with conflicting results, this first tunnel period has been explored by New Testament criticism. Rudolf Bultmann, following Albert Schweitzer, judges the glory sayings of the Gospels as oldest, holding that the sayings in Q are probably the creation of the Hellenistic church.<sup>38</sup> John A. T. Robinson, building on the work of T. Francis Glasson, takes the very opposite view.<sup>39</sup> It

37 In 1901 Wilhelm Wrede published *Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht) and Albert Schweitzer his *Das Messianitäts- und Leidensgeheimnis*, E. T. *The Mystery of the Kingdom of God*, tr. Walter Lowrie (New York: Macmillan, 1950); but today it is no longer necessary to make a choice between the thoroughgoing skepticism of Wrede and the thoroughgoing eschatology of Schweitzer. Cf. T. W. Manson, "Realized Eschatology and the Messianic Secret," *Studies in the Gospels*, ed. D. E. Nineham (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1955), pp. 209-222. The victory of Jesus over the demonic powers is now accepted as the clue to the Gospel of Mark. Cf. James M. Robinson, *The Problem of History in Mark* (London: SCM, 1957).

38 *Theology of the New Testament*, tr. Kendrick Grobel (London: SCM, 1952), I, 3-11. Bultmann's presuppositions are given in detail in his book *The History of the Synoptic Tradition*, tr. John Marsh.

39 *Jesus and His Coming*, pp. 83-103.

will be obvious from what has already been said that our sympathies are more with Robinson, although the door of discussion has been left ajar on Mark and Matthew lest the possibility of a parallel development be excluded. Robinson's spirited statements as careful criticism are impressive indeed, but his conclusions do not discredit the place the *parousia* played in the life and faith of the early Church, even if Jesus in the days of His flesh did not speak of a long interim between the passion and the *parousia*. The nervous notion that the Christian hope of weal is unable to survive the woe of criticism is no credit to Christian faith. It is the content of the hope, even if the origin remains obscure, that commends itself for belief. It neither stands nor falls on a genetic guess.

The day of the Lord in this new perspective of the *parousia* is first found in the Thessalonian letters.<sup>40</sup> Of the eight *parousia* passages, three speak of weal (I Thess. 1:9f., 2:19f; 4:13-18), three warn of woe (I Thess. 5:1-11; II Thess. 1:7-10; 2:1-10), and two are benedictions (I Thess. 3:11-13; 5:23f.). I Thessalonians 1:9f. expresses a charismatic concern that is at once ethical and evangelical in an interim of time for turning and testing. They "turned to God from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come." The time of testing requires steadfastness, but the power and joy of the Holy Spirit are supplied for strength and inspiration (I Thess. 1:5, 7). At the end is deliverance from the coming wrath.

Gentile Christians "became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus which are in Judea" (2:14), for they suffered from the persecution of the Jews upon whom the wrath of God came at the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. Yet those who have shared the suffering will share the glory. "For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? For you are our glory and joy" (I Thess. 2:19f.). The hindrance of Satan fails before a faith that works, a love that labors, and a hope that patiently awaits the day of deliverance.

The pagan world, the devil, and death do not diminish

40 Rigaux, *Les Épîtres aux Thessalonians* (Paris: J. Gabalda, 1956), pp. 195-233, has a detailed digest of the sources, but see John A. T. Robinson, *Jesus and His Coming*, pp. 104-117 for important supplement.

the bright hope of the *parousia*. Prophetic eschatology is supplemented with apocalyptic in "the word of the Lord" in I Thessalonians 4:15f. Some of the saints had "fallen asleep," and grief had clouded the hope of the young Christian community. Comfort is found in an oracle older than our Gospels.<sup>41</sup>

The Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call, and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven;  
 And the dead (in Christ) will rise first;  
 then we who are alive, who are left, shall be caught up together with them in the cloud  
 to escort the Lord in the air (I Thess. 4:16f., Jeremias)

Those who have fallen asleep (*koimēthentas*), believing that "Jesus died and rose again" (4:14) and being as they are in the dormitory (*koimētērion*) of death, have done so "through Jesus" (*dia tou Iēsou*, 4:14). Therefore, these dead "in Christ" (*en Christō*) will not miss the day of Christ's enthronement. They will be the first to rise. This is all enthronement imagery in which the living join the dead to meet the King as He descends from heaven to reign on earth. The meeting is described with the same phrase as that found in the parable of the maidens, (*eis apantēsin*, Matt. 25:6; I Thess. 4:17, cf. Acts 28:15). As it was "the third day" when the Lord's theophany took place on Sinai (Exod. 19:10-18), so will it be when the Lord Jesus comes down from heaven. In Exodus 19:17, where it says, "Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God," the phrase *eis sunantēsin* is found in the LXX. The King will make his *parousia* on earth, and the faithful, both living and dead, will be present. A later passage from Paul sustains this view: "Knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence" (II Cor. 4:14).

The day of weal will be the day of woe for the wicked. Wrath to come (I Thess. 1:10; 2:16) will take them unaware. The prophetic eschatology noted in the parable of the thief (Luke 12:39f.; Matt. 24:43-51, Q) had evidently been delivered to Paul by tradition (cf. II Thess. 2:15; 3:6; I Cor. 11:2, 23; 15:3). This Paul pointedly says: "But as to the times and

41 Joachim Jeremias, *Unknown Sayings of Jesus*, tr. Reginald H. Fuller (New York: Macmillan, 1957), pp. 64-67.

the seasons, brethren, you have no need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves know well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night" (I Thess. 5:1f.). The parable of the thief is a part of tradition, and to the parable of the thief Paul adds an appeal that recalls the parable of the trap (Luke 21:34-36), from which the wicked will not escape, but it has been united to the simile of a woman in travail (cf. Jer. 6:24; 13:21; 22:23; 30:6; 49:24; 50:43). This double picture of travail and the trap underlines the suddenness and inescapability of the day of the Lord Jesus for the wicked who say: "There is peace and security" (I Thess. 5:3). Thief, travail, trap: vivid preaching!

As a warning to the brethren, Paul takes up the figure of the thief again and adds to these vivid metaphors a drunkard and a soldier (I Thess. 5:4-8). The day of the Lord will come like a thief only to those in darkness, never to "sons of light." It is also the drunkard who gets drunk at night and fails to watch and be sober (cf. Luke 12:45f.). The most watchful and sober person of all is the true soldier, so "let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation" (cf. Eph. 6:14-17). With an ethical saying the practical application is made (I Thess. 5:9f., cf. Rom. 14:8):

For God has not destined us for wrath  
but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who died for us so that whether we wake or sleep  
we might live with him.

Thus far Paul's woe eschatology has been as prophetic as the Q sayings, but the oracle on the revelation of the Lord Jesus in II Thessalonians 1:7b-10 is powerful apocalyptic. The revelation (*apokalupsis*) is the *parousia*:

... when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty  
angels in flaming fire,  
inflicting vengeance upon those who do not know God  
and upon those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

They shall suffer the punishment of eternal destruction  
and exclusion from the presence of the Lord  
and from the glory of his might,

when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints,  
and to be marveled at in all who have believed,  
because our testimony to you was believed.

The *apokalupsis*, like the synonym *parousia*, is "from heaven" (*ap' ouranou*, I Thess. 4:16; II Thess. 1:7), for each word describes a glorious manifestation of a hidden presence, of the one veiled becoming unveiled.

The so-called Pauline apocalypse in II Thessalonians 2:1-12 is actually the third one along with I Thessalonians 4:16, 17a and II Thessalonians 1:7b-10, but it is the only one that gives a sequence of events, events already discussed in relation to Anti-christ. The gathering of the elect or saints at the *parousia* (2:1) has already been noted in the Synoptic Apocalypse (Mark 13:26f.; Matt. 24:30f.), but it is a special feature in Paul (I Thess. 3:13; 4:17; II Thess. 1:10; Col. 3:4).

Now for the benedictions. The first (I Thess. 3:11-13) is a twofold prayer in which high Christology and high eschatology are united. The first part, addressed to "our God and Father himself, and our Lord Jesus" is the only instance in Paul when Jesus is made the object of prayer (3:11), but this is in light of the belief that "God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified" (Acts 2:36, cf. Phil. 2:5-11). The second part (3:12f.) prays that the Lord, meaning Jesus, may establish the hearts of the people "in holiness before our God and Father, at the *parousia* of our Lord Jesus with all his saints." Here again the gathering of the saints is associated with the *parousia*, but "all his saints" or "holy ones" here may be, or include, angels, as in Zechariah 14:5 (cf. Mark 8:38; Matt. 16:27; 25:31). The main point in the prayer is the identification of Jesus with the Lord and the association of Jesus with God in the prayer and the *parousia*. To halt short of a high eschatology that is both prophetic and apocalyptic is to halt short of a high Christology in which Jesus is confessed as Lord.

The second benediction (I Thess. 5:23f.) related to the *parousia* does not include Jesus as the object of prayer, but it still has the high Christology in which Jesus is Lord: "May the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the *parousia* of our Lord Jesus Christ." The whole of life is holy in the light of the blessed hope. "Wholly" (*holoteleis*) comes from *holos* (all) and *telos* (end) and means completeness at the final outcome.

The day, as "the day of our Lord Jesus Christ," is fully described in Paul's Corinthian correspondence (I Cor. 1:8; cf. 3:13; 5:5; II Cor. 1:14). Spiritual gifts are to be exercised as we

"wait for the revealing (*apokalupsis*) of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 1:7) or the *parousia* (I Cor. 15:23). On the fundamental fact of the resurrection of Jesus (I Cor. 15:1-19) the eschatological drama, in which Paul's *parousia* preaching reaches the pinnacle, the two Adams and the two ages furnish visions of weal and woe. The two Adams are the realms of woe and weal, death and life (15:21f.):

For as by a man came death,  
by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead.  
For as in Adam all die,  
so also in Christ shall all be made alive.

Corporate death is overcome by corporate life, an idea later elaborated as grounds for "our hope of sharing the glory of God" (Rom. 5:2) in two great three-stanza hymns (Rom. 5:12-21; 6:3-11).

The two Adams represent the two ages.<sup>42</sup> In this "present evil age" (Gal. 1:4) woe weighs heavy on man as the knowledge of sin and death. Man knows that his being is "being-unto-death" (*Sein-zum-Tode*), as Martin Heidegger has put it so despairingly. But this is inauthentic existence. Authentic existence is existence "in Christ," and this is being unto life (*Sein-zum-Leben*), if Paul were to put his Greek thoughts into German. The new being in Christ comes in three stages. The first is the resurrection of Jesus "Christ the first fruits" (*aparchē Christos*). The second stage is the *parousia*, a term used in the Corinthian letters for the arrival of persons also (I Cor. 16:17; II Cor. 7:6f.; 10:10, cf. Phil. 1:26; 2:12). At the *parousia* those that belong to Christ will be raised to reign with Him, the familiar figure of the elect being gathered at this time. The third stage, the end (*telos*), is a debated point and calls for more consideration.

Some insist that the *parousia* is the *telos* (end). This may be argued if Matthew 24:6,13,14; Mark 13:7,13; Luke 21:9 alone are considered, but it seems impossible to make this identification in I Corinthians 15:23f. The Greek word *eita*, usually translated "then," means then in the sense of "after that," as the previous use in I Corinthians 15:5, 7 ("then to the twelve," "then to all the apostles") makes clear. At the end "he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power" (I Cor. 15:24).

42 Anders Nygren, *Commentary on Romans*, tr. Carl C. Rasmussen (London: SCM, 1952), pp. 206-229.

Between the *parousia* and the *telos* "he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet" (15:25). He puts His enemies under His feet in two stages: (1) subjection by His resurrection and (2) destruction by His reign. The reign of Christ, the messianic reign, belongs to the period between subjection and destruction, invisible before the *parousia* and visible after the *parousia*. The fear that a point may be yielded to over-literal millennialism should not color our exegesis of this passage.<sup>43</sup> In this age the saints are "the refuse of the world, the offscouring of all things," longing to reign; but in the coming age they will judge the world and the angels (I Cor. 4:8-13; 6:2f.).

The second part of this drama (I Cor. 15:24-28), supplemented by Revelation 20:1-21:4, was the basis on which Irenaeus of Lyon built his belief in the Kingdom of the Son (*Adv. Haer.* V.36). He did not draw the heretical conclusion proposed by Marcellus of Ancyra, who taught that the Trinity will no longer exist after God becomes "all in all" (I Cor. 15:28). "By his doctrine of a visible *regnum* of Christ on earth before the judgment, Irenaeus integrally connects life on earth and the resurrection. The present age passes gradually into the resurrection, until finally the earthly framework disappears and the eschatological age merges into the ineffable."<sup>44</sup> This reign, invisible and visible, is solidly supported by New Testament teaching.<sup>45</sup>

High Christology and high eschatology are finally united in Philippians. The Servant Hymn (2:5-11) that calls us to confess Jesus Christ as Lord is in complete harmony with belief in "the day of Jesus Christ" or "the day of Christ." Paul was persuaded that the good work begun would be brought "to completion at the day of Jesus Christ" (1:6) and prayed that the saints "may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ" (1:10). He urged them to hold "fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ" he would not have run in vain (2:16). The word *parousia* appears only in reference to persons (1:26; 2:12), but the colony of Rome is reminded that their "commonwealth is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ" (3:20).

<sup>43</sup> I. B., X, 236-239; John A. T. Robinson, *Jesus and His Coming*, pp. 21, 31f. Cf. Anselm of Laon, *Library of Christian Classics*, X, 269f.

<sup>44</sup> Gustaf Wingren, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

<sup>45</sup> Oscar Cullmann, *The Early Church*, tr. A. J. B. Higgins (London: SCM, 1956), pp. 105-137.

The word *parousia* is also missing in Colossians, but the high Christology in the Hymn of the Firstborn (1:15-17) is equaled by the high eschatology which promises: "When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory" (3:4). Raised to the weal of life from the woe of life in faith-union with Christ, the Christian is called to "put to death" the things that belong to the old man and the old age and "put on" those things which belong to the new man and the new age (3:5,12). Eschatology and ethics are united in the interim between the manifestation of Christ in flesh and His manifestation in glory. The noun manifestation (*phanerosis*) is never used of the *parousia* or the *apokalupsis* in the New Testament, but the use of the verb (*phaneroumai*) would permit the *parousia* to be called the *phanerosis* as well as the *apokalupsis* or, as in the Pastorals, the *epiphaneia*.

The great Roman letter speaks of "the day of wrath" (2:5), but it is clear from the rousing reveille of the Soldier Song in 13:11-14 that it is also a day of salvation:

Besides this you know what hour it is,  
how it is full time now for you to wake from sleep.  
For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed;  
the night is far gone, the day is at hand.

Let us then cast off the works of darkness  
and put on the armor of light;  
let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day,  
not in reveling and drunkenness,  
not in debauchery and licentiousness,  
not in quarreling and jealousy.  
But put on the Lord Jesus Christ  
and make no provision for the flesh,  
to gratify its desires.

The first stanza expresses the weal of the day in the night, and the second stanza expresses the woe of the night in the day. Ephesians speaks only of "the day of redemption" (4:30), but this is the weal side of "the day of wrath" in Romans. In a cluster of six ethical exhortations is the warning: "And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed for the day of redemption" (Eph. 4:30).

In the Pastoral Epistles hymnology is vitally related to both high Christology and high eschatology.<sup>46</sup> At least ten passages may be, in part or as a whole, Hymns of Epiphany (I Tim.

46 Cf. Burton Scott Easton, *The Pastoral Epistles* (London: SCM, 1948).

1:17; 2:5f.; 3:16; 4:10; 6:15b-16; II Tim. 1:9f.; 2:11f.; 4:1-8; Tit. 2:11-14; 3:5-7), some having to do with the first coming of Christ, some the second coming, and some both. In II Thessalonians 2:8 the phrase “appearing of his coming” (*epiphaneia tēs parousias*, my translation) links the idea of epiphany with the idea of *parousia*, both of which were used in pagan society as appropriate language for the emperor. The very word *sotēr* (savior), used frequently of Jesus in the Pastorals, was also a title of the emperor. It is no wonder that pagan spies often reported that Christians were dangerous subversives who gave supreme allegiance to a savior other than Caesar. The report was in a very profound and deeper way true, for the gospel of grace and glory is deadly for all dictators that would displace the living God in the lives of men.

The first epiphany belongs to history in a very real way, although it wrought the shift of the ages and made grace the fulcrum and center of all historical meaning. The most impressive Hymn of Epiphany describing the first coming of Christ is II Timothy 1:9f.:

Who saved us and called us  
 with a holy calling,  
 not in virtue of our works  
 but in virtue of his own purpose and the grace  
 which he gave us in Christ Jesus  
 ages ago,  
 and now has manifested  
 through the appearing (epiphany) of our Savior  
 Christ Jesus,  
 who abolished death  
 and brought life and immortality to light  
 through the gospel.

The second epiphany is connected with what is perhaps a baptismal charge in I Timothy 6:13-16. The Hymn of Epiphany follows the charge to “keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the [epiphany] of our Lord Jesus Christ; and this will be made manifest at the proper time by

The blessed and only Sovereign,  
 the King of kings and the Lord of lords,  
 who alone has immortality  
 and dwells in unapproachable light,  
 whom no man has ever seen or can see.  
 To him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen.

Both epiphanies, the first and second coming, are proclaimed with incomparable beauty in the Hymn of Hope in Titus 2:11-14 (cf. ASV, notes 8f.):

For the grace of God has appeared  
 bringing salvation to all men,  
 instructing us to the intent  
 that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts,  
 we should live soberly and righteously and godly  
 in this present age;  
 looking for the blessed hope  
 and epiphany of our great God and Savior (Jesus Christ);  
 who gave himself for us  
 that he might redeem us from all iniquity,  
 and purify to himself a people for his own possession,  
 jealous of good works.

The gospel of grace and glory embraces two appearings and two ages. Between the ages God's people live godly lives and do good works.

There are three appearings of Christ in the Epistle to the Hebrews, one in heaven and two in history (9:23-28). At the present He is in "heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf" (9:24). In the past He "appeared once for all at the end of the age to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (9:26). But in the future He "will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him" (9:29). This is the only place in the New Testament that explicitly uses the term "second" to describe the future epiphany in history, and the reference to His present appearance in heaven fills with meaning the time between the two appearances in history. The interim is no vacuum.

As corollaries to the three appearances are the three attitudes of faith, hope, and love (Heb. 10:19-25). We are called to "draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith," to "hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering," and "to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near." The day of woe will thus be a day of weal for those who patiently wait (10:26-39). "But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who have faith and keep their souls" (10:39).

According to James, Christian wisdom requires patience in the light of a delayed *parousia*. The *Shekinah* glory has al-

ready tabernacled in the human flesh of "our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory" (2:1, cf. I Cor. 2:8); but at the time of the *parousia*, the unveiling of His glory, He will come to rectify the injustices of human society. Two parables prescribe patience as preparation for the *parousia* (5:7-9). The parable of the farmer waiting patiently in the long interval between the early rains in October-November and the late rains in April-May provides a Palestinian picture of perseverance between the Lord's sowing and the Lord's harvest. The parable of the judge shifts the prospects from weal to woe and reminds the grumblers that judgment is imminent: "behold, the Judge is standing at the doors." Therefore, the *parousia* (4:7,9) is, after the example of Job, "the end (*telos*) of the Lord" (5:11, KJV).

The pilgrimage of God's people between two manifestations (*phanerothentos*, 1:20; 5:4) is presented in a threefold way in I Peter. The first part (1:3-2:10) is a day of salvation (1:5, 9f.; 2:2), a day of deliverance, in the hope of a coming revelation of Jesus Christ (1:5,7,13). The work of salvation (1:3-12) is that of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a work in which "the Spirit of Christ" indicated to the prophets of the Old Covenant "the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glory" (1:11). The way of salvation (1:13-2:10), reversing the order of experience, is one of hope, love, and faith in which the hope of coming glory sustains the saints in times of suffering.

The second part is a day of visitation (2:11-4:11), the preparation for which is good conduct (2:11-3:12) and a good conscience (3:13-4:11). The outcome (*telos*, 1:9; 4:7,17), when the Lord Jesus will be revealed and salvation will be complete and the purpose of all things is complete, is near (4:7). In the interim God's people are called to live according to an eschatological ethic befitting aliens and exiles in a strange land, and it may be that others will see our "good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation" (2:12).

The third part is a day of vindication (4:12-5:11). The household of God must not think the present "fiery ordeal" to be a strange thing, for they are a pilgrim people upon whom the *Shekinah* glory rests (4:14). Time is to be reckoned in terms of the *telos* (end) when the judgment will vindicate the righteous and punish the wicked. As the flock of God, Christians must follow the chief shepherd and flee the devil who "prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking some one to devour" (5:8). Elders are exhorted to shepherd the flock with their

minds on the manifestation of the chief shepherd from which the faithful will "obtain the unfading crown of glory" (5:4). The pilgrim promise is: "And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, establish, and strengthen you" (5:10). Historical judgment and apocalyptic glory blend into one story of salvation.

Historical judgment and apocalyptic glory increase in intensity in II Peter. It is the only writing in the New Testament that speaks of an event within history as a *parousia* of Christ. Human arrivals, it will be recalled, are described as such (I Cor. 16:17; II Cor. 7:6f.; 10:10; Phil. 1:26; 2:12). Already, on the mount of transfiguration, they witnessed that which enabled them to say: "For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and *parousia* of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty" (II Pet. 1:16). This was more than the mythological, for the event took place *within* history. Not yet have they gained "an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (1:11), but the historical Jesus "received honor and glory from God the Father and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory" (1:17). This *parousia* (presence) is more than "the *parousia* of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus" (I Cor. 16:17), or "the *parousia* of Titus" (II Cor. 10:10, cf. Phil. 1:26; 2:12). The coming age, in apocalyptic glory, has been proleptically projected into the historical situation so that the historical event is a prelude to the *parousia*.

The glory of God on the mount of transfiguration neither removed Peter from "this body" (*skēnoma*, tabernacle; cf. Acts 7:46) nor put him in a position that did not require him to put off his body (*skēnoma*) at death (1:13f), but it did give him "a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts" (1:19). This lamp helps to avoid the "false prophets" and "destructive heresies" that bring "swift destruction" at the coming judgment (2:1-3). Gloomy pictures from history and nature illustrate the doom of apostates (2:4-22; Jude).

There is a certain polarity between the *parousia* of present power (II Pet. 1:16) and the *parousia* of promise (3:4,12). On the way to weal is the valley of woe. The scoffers, scoffing at the delayed *parousia*, are ignorant of both the past (3:1-7) and of the patience of God (3:8-11). The cataclysm of water in the

days of Noah destroys the claim of historical continuity and typifies the coming cataclysm of fire. Time does move on, but this is a sign of God's patience, not a broken promise. The Lord, with whom "one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" is giving man time to repent before "the day of the Lord" comes "like a thief" and the world conflagration takes place (3:8-10).

For the saints the delayed *parousia* is a time for waiting (3:11-13) and watching (3:14-16). While they "wait for new heavens and new earth in which righteousness dwells" they are to live holy and godly lives, but they must watch while they wait lest false prophets lead them astray and they lose their stability. The assurance for perseverance is to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (3:18, cf. 1:3-11). Following "loud boasts of folly" from licentious leaders may lead one to moral slavery and ultimate destruction (2:1-3, 17-22).

*As a Mystical Event.* The Johannine tradition viewed as a whole has a union of the historical, mystical, and apocalyptic elements of eschatology. In I John 2:28-3:3 the *parousia* is a second *phanerosis* (manifestation). In the first manifestation Jesus came "to take away sins" and "to destroy the works of the devil" (3:5,8). Sincere hope for a second manifestation establishes confidence and effects cleansing in personal life. A beautiful word play is made in the expressed hope that "we may have confidence (*parrēsia*) and not shrink from him in shame at his coming (*parousia*)" (I John 2:28). In the light of the second advent we should be living with nothing to hide now, because nothing can be hidden then. With complete openness to God and man, the boldness of the present removes the blushing of the future. Christian hope and human hypocrisy are utterly inconsistent, for the *parousia* is the removal of all masks, the bringing to light of hidden things. Therefore, our hope is a process of purification until we are finally perfected in His presence (3:2f.). This will be the *parousia* or *phanerosis*.

In the Fourth Gospel the historical, mystical, and apocalyptic coming are all present. John A. T. Robinson<sup>47</sup> has suggested a correspondence between the great "I comes" of the Synoptic Gospels (Luke 7:34; cf. Matt. 11:19; Luke 12:49; 12:51; cf. Matt. 10:34; Luke 12:52; cf. Matt. 10:25; Luke 19:10; Matt. 5:17; Mark 2:17; 10:45) and the great "I ams" of the Fourth

<sup>47</sup> Robinson, *Jesus and His Coming*, p. 63.

Gospel (6:35,41,48,51; 8:12; 10:7,14; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1), but the Fourth Gospel has its own group of great "I comes" (5:43; 8:14; 10:10; 12:27). The theme of His historical coming is stated in the prologue: "He came to his own home, and his own people received him not" (1:11).

His mystical coming is especially prominent in the orphan's oracle in John 14:18-24. The declaration of Jesus promises: "I will come to you" (14:18). This coming will be a mystical manifestation, an emphany (from the verb *emphanizein*, to manifest). C. H. Dodd cites Josephus, *Antiquities*, XV.II.7 (*emphaneiai tou theou*) to support the claim that the emphany is a synonymn for the epiphany.<sup>48</sup> His mystical return includes three terms. First comes the *mikron* (the little while), a word used seven times in the allegory of the absence (16:16-24). An allegory or *paroimia* is a veiled saying in contrast to *parrēsia* (unveiled or open saying, 16:25). The emphany (manifestation) will follow as "that day" (16:23). The *theoria* (vision) of the disciples "in that day" will complete the mystical union (14:19f.), and the disciples will be a community of *agape* (love). This took place in the octave after the resurrection (20:19-29), but the Great Sufflation ("receive the Holy Spirit," 20:22) is more fully expressed in the Paraclete Poem (14:15-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-11).

The dialogue of Jesus with Judas (not Iscariot) (14:22-24) is an explanation of how the emphany will create the *monē* (abode) promised by Jesus in 14:2f. where it is said: "In my Father's house are many rooms (*monai pollai*); if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place (*topon*) for you? And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also." This *monē* is composed of those united to God and to one another by *agape* (love). Jesus' reply to Judas' question of "how" says: "If a man loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our *monē* (abode) with him. He who does not love me does not keep my words; and the word which you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me" (14:23f.).

It is not difficult to see how the decline of apocalyptic millennialism in the early Church led to a resurgence of eschatology in the mystical monasticism of the ecumenical

48 *The Interpretation of The Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Camb. University Press, 1953), p. 405, n. 1.

Church. Sympathetic contact with the Hesychasm of Mt. Athos in Greece, especially as it was expounded by Gregory Palamas in his idea of the Uncreated Light, suggests how much the separation of Western Christendom from Eastern Christendom has impoverished the whole family of God. Gregory Palamas (c. 1296-1359), the most influential Greek theologian, taught that it is possible in this life for the soul, by purification and devotion, to apprehend the mystical light of God's presence (the Light of Tabor). This is strangely similar to the Hebrew idea of the *Shekinah* glory, but it should be claimed by all Christians. It is the "energy" of God, not the "essence," that is received (cf. glory, enlightenment, energy, heavenlies, fulness in the prayer of Eph. 1:15-23).

The historical coming did not exhaust the energies of God, and it is an error to conclude that the mystical or transmitted eschatology of the Fourth Gospel excludes the more traditional idea of an apocalyptic coming of our Lord. As the eucharistic presence does not exclude the resurrection at the last day (6:39, 44,54,62; 11:24; 12:48), so the mystical coming does not exclude the apocalyptic coming. The appendix chapter of John retains the apocalyptic coming (21:20-23). The third day (1:51; 3:13f.; 6:27,43,62; 8:28; 12:23,34; 13:31) does not exclude the last day (6:39,44,54; 11:24; 12:48). There is an interim between the third day of His resurrection and the last day of our resurrection.

*As an Apocalyptic Event.* The Johannine Apocalypse unites historical, mystical, and apocalyptic eschatology. The Pascha and the *parousia* are kept in dynamic polarity by the presence of Him who says: "Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one; I died, and behold I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades" (Rev. 1:17f., cf. 1:8; 22:12f.). Past, present, and future are celebrated in the weekly renewal of the eucharistic banquet. The striking study of the Apocalypse as a paschal liturgy by Massey H. Shepherd, Jr. opens up a whole new field for consideration, and a term such as eucharistic eschatology may best embrace all the historical, mystical, and apocalyptic elements involved.<sup>49</sup> The Lord's day (Revelation 1:10), the day of the weekly eucharistic worship, was for the early Christians a renewal of hope that the day of

49 Massey H. Shepherd, Jr., *The Paschal Liturgy and the Apocalypse* (Richmond, Virginia: John Knox, 1960).

the Lord would bring eternal peace in the presence of the risen and triumphant Lord.

Seven visions of the consummation of the ages constitute the seventh series in the Apocalypse.<sup>50</sup> The first vision (19:11-16) is the battle of Armageddon (14:14-20; 16:12-16; 17:12-14) in which Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords comes to conquer Antichrist and all his powers. The second vision (19:17-21) is the great supper of God in which the wicked are consumed, a vivid contrast to the marriage supper of the Lamb in which the righteous rejoice (19:6-10). The third vision (20:1-3) is the binding of Satan for the thousand-year reign of Christ on earth. The fourth vision (20:4-6) is the millennium in which Christ reigns, an idea that signifies that Christ will triumph *within* history and not merely *beyond* history. It need not be taken any more literally than the rest of the Apocalypse, but it does represent the eschatological "rest" (Heb. 3:7-4:13) of the people of God.<sup>51</sup> The fifth vision (Rev. 20:7-10) is the battle of Gog and Magog in which the remote peoples of the earth not destroyed at the battle of Armageddon are destroyed as they march "upon the broad earth and surround the camp of the saints and the beloved city," i.e., those who reign with Christ on earth. The sixth vision (20:11-15) is the judgment of the wicked at the great white throne (cf. I Cor. 6:2f.), and the seventh (21:1-8) is the descent of God to the new creation in the New Jerusalem, the eternal age in which God will dwell with His people.

50 I. B., XII, 511-533.

51 Shepherd, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-21, 81.

## **Part III**

### **The Hope of Creation**

### *Chapter Nine*

## The New Creation

THE ASSUMPTION that the cosmos is eternal has been seriously shaken by the progress of natural science. Along with a theological eschatology a scientific eschatology has developed. At no point is this situation more evident than in the elaborations of the Second Law of Thermodynamics, a theory that holds that the amount of available energy in the universe is becoming less and less and that finally the whole system will suffer "heat death." The process is called an increase of entropy, from the Greek word *entrepein*, to turn in. The law is thus distinguished from the First Law of Thermodynamics, which has to do with the conservation of energy.

One of the clearest statements of the theory concludes that there is a "historic character" to nature and that "every event is in the strictest sense irreversible."<sup>1</sup> Creation and cosmic end become corollaries. "If events follow upon each other with finite speed, they must run out in finite time. It follows, not only that there is an end in heat death awaiting the events, but also that events must have had a beginning in time."<sup>2</sup>

It is evident that such scientific eschatology is not incompatible with theological eschatology, but cosmic redemption does not depend on cosmic catastrophe. God is not bound by

1 C. F. von Weizsäcker, *The History of Nature*, tr. Fred D. Wieck (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949), pp. 47, 51.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 59. A detailed study of this problem needs to assess the theories expounded in James Jeans, *The Mysterious Universe* (New York: Macmillan, 1931); Fred Hoyle, *The Nature of the Universe* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1950); A. C. B. Lovell, *The Individual and the Universe* (London: Oxford University Press, 1959); John Macmurray, *The Boundaries of Science* (London: Faber & Faber, 1939). A brief statement is by John Wren-Lewis, "Science and the Doctrine of Creation," *Expository Times*, LXXI (Dec. 1959), 80-82.

the laws of creation, and there is no assurance that creation will run a gradual course to the end. Cosmic redemption rests on the belief that the living God who created man together with his body and his environment will surely save the same before the ominous threat of oblivion. Holy Spirit linked with human spirit is the motif that finally harmonizes the discords of man and so rescues creation from chaos. If there is no Creator there is no creation, but if things visible rest on things invisible the foundations will not finally fail.

God's ultimate promise is: "Behold, I make all things new" (Rev. 21:5). This includes God's whole creation, things visible and invisible, things as well as persons. The new age that began to dawn in the first coming of Christ into the world will be consummated in eternity, the age of all ages. The new creation is the destiny of the new man and the consummation of the new covenant. A constellation of concepts may be grouped under these two major heads: the *futility* of creation, and the *freedom* of creation.

#### THE FUTILITY OF CREATION

At times the prophet of God, looking into the terrible crystal of judgment, sees only the vision of cosmic destruction, of the whole cosmos reduced to chaos (Jer. 4:23-26):

I looked on the earth, and lo, it was  
waste and void;  
and to the heavens, and they had no  
light.  
I looked on the mountains, and lo, they  
were quaking,  
and all the hills moved to and fro.  
I looked, and lo, there was no man,  
and all the birds of the air had fled.  
I looked, and lo, the fruitful land was a  
desert,  
and all its cities were laid in ruins  
before the Lord, before his fierce  
anger.

At other times, when the Creator and Redeemer, the Lord of all life and history, confronts and comforts His people, the threat of woe is transformed into the hope of weal. The meaningless maze of human and historical contradictions opens into a deeper dimension, a level where all the riddles of life and tragedies of history look new and meaningful before the

renewed understanding of the purpose of God. Such is the vision of Isaiah 45:18:

For thus says the Lord,  
who created the heavens  
(he is God!),  
who formed the earth and made it  
(he established it;  
he did not create it a chaos,  
he formed it to be inhabited!):  
"I am the Lord, and there is no other. . . ."

The shifting scenes of weal and woe, forming a theater for the drama of redemption and judgment, find ultimate harmony in God and God alone (Isa. 45:7):

I form light and create darkness,  
I make weal and create woe,  
I am the Lord, who do all these things.

The foundations shake at the onslaught of cosmic fall and frustration, but faith clings to the hope that the high purpose of God to bring His creation into glory will not fail.

*The Foundation of the Cosmos.* Never is it argued in Scripture that the creation has a founder. Faith in a sovereign God assumes this as a corollary to the redeeming grace made manifest in history. If His grace is sovereign in salvation, it must also be in creation, for He abides the same in His sufficiency and purpose. This is the fundamental assumption behind the affirmation that God and His purpose are above and beyond the foundation of the world (*katabolē tou kosmou*, Matt. 13:35; 25:24; Luke 11:50; John 17:24; Eph. 1:4; Heb. 4:3; 9:26; I Pet. 1:20; Rev. 13:8; 17:8).

This foundation has to do with the absolute beginning when God makes a cosmos from chaos, an order from disorder, creation from nothingness. The cosmos is created between the living God and a yawning void, between He Who Is and nothingness. Faith follows the path between the possibilities of being and non-being, between destiny and origin.

In biblical thought the cosmos is related to God both as His system and His sign.<sup>3</sup> The Bible begins with the proclamation of the goodness of creation grounded in the goodness of God (Gen. 1:1-2:4a). Order is the most obvious mark

<sup>3</sup> H. Wheeler Robinson, *Inspiration and Revelation in the Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1946), pp. 1-16.

of the majestic pavilion that surrounds man in panoramic wonder. With poetic power this priestly psalm becomes man's praise of the goodness of God at the turn of each Sabbath rest.

Creation is the act of God alone. The verb *bārā* (create) is used only of God's action in the creation, in which He is Lord of all. It is at once the work and word of Him who says: "I am the Lord, that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to graven images" (Isa. 42:8, cf. 48:11). And again: "I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god" (44:6; cf. 45:5,21f.; 46:8; 48:11f.). Every man must choose, ultimately, between impersonal polytheism and a personal monotheism, between I-It and I-Thou (cf. Isa. 57).

The formless *Tohuwabohu* is transformed into a theater of action for God in His relation to man. God storms the citadel of chaos with His Spirit (*Ruach*), and the meaningless monster of *Tehom* (the cosmic abyss) trembles before Him, but the preprimeval possibility of chaos and nothingness persists. If God's activity ceases for one moment the cosmos would drop back into chaos and nothingness.

The first day celebrates the light of day as a cosmic power that overcomes the chaotic darkness of the night. "While the day is light from the first created original light, night consists in nothing more than that darkness which was eliminated, now limited to be sure, by wholesome cosmic order. Every night, when the created forms flow together into formlessness, chaos regains a certain power over what has been created."<sup>4</sup> In the morning the unformed becomes form and then by evening sinks back into formlessness. The bright polarity of light dissolves into unity with the darkness."<sup>5</sup> This rhythm of weal and woe is the way of God in His creation, who can "form light and create darkness" (Isa. 45:7).

On the second day the firmament, like "a gigantic hemispherical and ponderous bell," is created a stronghold against the chaotic waters. "The heavenly bell, which is brought into the waters of chaos, forms first of all a separating wall between the waters beneath and above."<sup>6</sup> The Latin *firmamentum* and the

<sup>4</sup> Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis*, tr. John H. Marks (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961), pp. 50f.

<sup>5</sup> Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Creation and Fall*, tr. John C. Fletcher (New York: Macmillan, 1959), p. 24.

<sup>6</sup> Von Rad, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

German *Feste* rightly translate the Hebrew *Rāqīa*, for it is the mighty fortress against the threat of chaotic waters. It is Heaven in contrast to a meaningless *Tehom* of *Tohuwabohu*.

On the third day the work begun on the second day is completed when the waters under the heavenly dome are gathered together as the seas. The earth as the dry ground is the cosmic corollary to the orderly firmament above. Together they fight against chaos. "The origin of the ocean from the dimension of the chaotic is clear enough. The cosmos, therefore, is surrounded entirely and thus threatened on all sides, above, and below, by cosmic spaces, which, to be sure, can no longer be called directly chaotic, but which still permanently preserve something hostile to God and creation."<sup>7</sup>

Organic life first appeared on the third day when plants sprang up from the dry ground, but creaturely life is first suggested by the stars on the fourth day. They are "considered as creatures and as dependent on God's ordering creative will."<sup>8</sup> The two great lights, the sun and the moon, are to "rule" the day and the night as the Creator rules over the creation.

By the fifth day the cosmos is ready for the living creatures. The verb *bārā'* (create) is again used to designate the divine creativity and the direct relationship between the Creator and His creatures. The mythical sea monsters, symbolized by *Leviathan* (Ps. 74:14; Isa. 27:1; cf. Dan. 7:2ff.; Rev. 11:7; 12:3; 13:1ff.) and *Rahab* (Ps. 89:10f.), are removed from human understanding but not from the creative will by which God is able to conquer chaos and create cosmos.

On the sixth day the land animals appear as beings related to the realm below. It is "only indirectly" that they "receive the power of procreation from God," but man is the crown of the cosmos, the lord of creation, and the link to that which is above. He is assigned dominion and is the image of the invisible God under whose lordship he rules and subdues.

All is so harmonious in this cosmic order of paradisaical peace that man is assigned only vegetables to eat. Killing and slaughter are excluded in this good creation. Six times it is pronounced "good" (Gen. 1:4,10,12,18,21,25), and after the creation of male and female in the image of God it is

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 52.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53.

"very good" (v. 31).<sup>9</sup> The symbolic beauty of this majestic psalm goes far beyond the unhappy battles of the Babel-Bible days, but there are still exegetical swamps into which the light has not yet penetrated.

Creation reaches its goal in the eschatological rest of the people of God (Heb. 4), so that the end is as the beginning. *"Creation in the Old Testament is an eschatological concept.* The fact that God is the creator of the world means that He compasses the complete time process, ruling, determining, and completing all ages. That is why He is called the first and the last, Isaiah 44:6"<sup>10</sup>

The glory of creation blossoms in the biblical *berakah* of Psalm 104. The Lord is blessed for His benefits recounted in the order of Genesis 1:1-2:4a, but there is also a "philosophy of the cosmos."<sup>11</sup> The glory of God in creation is seen as God covers Himself with light and lays the foundation of the earth (Ps. 104:1-9). His preservation is praised for the benefits of springs of water, vegetation, the moon and the sun, the sea and its animals (vv. 10-26). His providential care is over all as He brings them toward their intended goal (vv. 27-30). Wondrous works call for a doxology (vv. 31-35).

The Egyptian "Hymn to Aton," dated from the time of Akhenaton (1380-1362 B.C.), has much of this monotheistic marveling before the greatness of creation. Some have thought that Psalm 104 was actually based on the Egyptian hymn, but the differences are too great. At least it must be said that the glory of God in creation is manifest among the Gentiles also, and the argument that the teachings of Psalm 19 are possible only within the covenant of Israel should be abandoned. The Creator is glorified in His creation even among the Gentiles (Rom. 10:18).

The scriptural teaching is not nullified by scientific investigation. More than once the theology of creation has been translated into a new scientific language without loss of meaning. The "big bell" view, based on the ancient Babylonian view

<sup>9</sup> Irenaeus of Lyon used the goodness of creation to refute the Gnostic heretics who denied that the Creator and the Redeemer are one. See Anders Nygren, *Agape and Eros*, tr. Philip S. Watson (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1953), pp. 393-412 for a classic statement of this issue.

<sup>10</sup> Ludwig Koehler, *Old Testament Theology*, tr. A. S. Todd (London: Lutterworth, 1957), p. 88.

<sup>11</sup> I.B., IV, 550.

of the universe, became a "big ball" view in the second century of the Christian era, when Ptolemy of Alexandria expounded a new theory that dominated Christian theology for fourteen hundred years. It is a great tribute to the sanity of the early Church Fathers that this translation was made without heresy trials on Scripture versus science.

Wisdom has not always prevailed in modern times as it did in the Middle Ages. Although Copernicus was able to challenge the cycles and epicycles of Ptolemaic astronomy and die a natural death, Galileo and a great company since have met heavy head winds whipped up by theologians with more zeal than knowledge. Yet theological translation, like biblical translation, wins in the end. Today, as in the time of Newton, a great scientist such as Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker can write a scientific genesis (*The History of Nature*) for modern men that gives greater glory to God and makes biblical eschatology as relevant as the biblical belief in creation.

The cosmic order, reflecting as it does the goodness and glory of God, is a sign that points away from the creation to the Creator. This makes for the mystery of creation. The second part of the Elihu speeches in the book of Job (36:1-37:24) leads into the hidden mercy and the haunting mystery of God.<sup>12</sup> God's glory in creation is unsearchable, but His greatness glimmers through the meteorological portents of autumn and winter and in the stillness of the summer's heat. As Lord of autumn (36:26-33) His glory is revealed in providential bounty veiled in the thunderstorm. Grace and judgment are hidden in the weal and woe of the storm. As Lord of winter (37:1-13) the snow and showers add to the glory of the thunderstorm as the hurricane from the south and the cold wind of the north, with frost and ice, make manifest the marvels of God. As Lord of summer (37:14-22) the splendor of God is seen in the stillness and sultriness of summer heat.

God himself speaks to Job out of the whirlwind that veils His majesty (38:1-42:6). The first discourse describes the wisdom of God the Creator (38:1-39:30) in the wonders of the creation of the earth and sea, the days and nights, and of the mysteries of the inorganic and organic world. Job is silent before questions so sublime. The second discourse (40:6-42:6) turns from the wisdom to the power of God illustrated

12 I.B., III, 1163-1169.

by the Behemoth and the Leviathan. Before such cosmic power Job is brought to repentance.

Rudolf Otto has rightly used Job 38 to illustrate the religious experience of the numinous, the *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*, beyond all that is true, good, and beautiful, a mystery that is both awesome and holy, overwhelming and fascinating.<sup>13</sup>

Around A.D. 800 Shankara wrote a commentary on the *Vedānta Sutras* that expounds a unity in all things, but the phenomenal world is reduced to an illusion (*Maya*). In the reinterpretation of Ramanuja around A.D. 1100 the phenomenal world and individual souls have real existence, but they are the body of Brahma. The reality of cosmic redemption vanishes as much in the identity of Ramanuja as in the illusion of Shankara. Some of the wonder of Job is there, but the work of God the Creator and Redeemer is not.

In biblical thought, creation is a medium of revelation, not *Maya*. It is a veil between man and the Creator, but it does not vanish when the Creator is also Redeemer. As a medium, creation may do a service that is both negative and positive, leading to the woe of judgment or the weal of redemption. The wrath of God may be revealed from heaven through the order of creation when men resist God in ungodliness and unrighteousness (Rom. 1:18-32). The subjective medium of conscience joins the objective medium of creation to accuse those who reject the law "written on their hearts" (Rom. 2:14-16).

The positive sign may be seen in a religion as primitive as the nature worship of the Lycaonians. Even there God "did not leave himself without witness" (Acts 14:17). Witnessing to the philosophical religion of Athens, Paul holds out for the possibility that men may "seek God" and "feel after him and find him" (Acts 17:27). Even Epimenides, the seventh-century B.C. philosopher and poet in Crete, was not ignorant that "in him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28). Aratus, Paul's fellow citizen in Cilicia, knew that men are indeed the offspring of God.

Within the household of faith creation is even more of a sign pointing to the Creator. "That is to say, once we have encountered God in Christ we must encounter Him in all things."<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Rudolph Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*, tr. John W. Harvey (London: Oxford University Press, 1943), pp. 80-84.

<sup>14</sup> Alan D. Galloway, *The Cosmic Christ* (New York: Harper, 1951), p. 250.

The religious art in France in the thirteenth century, a constellation of symbolism singular and superb, would not be possible on any ground outside the biblical belief in "God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth." Creation and history constitute a monumental medieval mirror that the glory of heaven may be manifest in all the earth.<sup>15</sup>

Plato's principle of plenitude prepared the way for the Christian's more personal encounter with the Creator in His creation. Plenitude presupposed "that it is of the nature of an Idea to manifest itself in concrete existence," "the realization of conceptual possibility in actuality."<sup>16</sup> But the history of thought excludes that principle of emanation which would make the creation an exact image of the heavenly model. Continuity between creation and the Creator is a contradiction, a becoming before the being that is God. "God is the ultimate limitation, and His existence is the ultimate irrationality."<sup>17</sup> The creation is not the realization of the Creator; it is, however, the visible reflection of the invisible God.

*The Fall of the Cosmos.* If the creation were the perfect image of the heavenly Creator there could be no cosmic fall, but the creation is contingent and along with free man may fall. Personal freedom, experienced in faith and hope and love, is the perspective from which the contingency and cosmic fall of the physical world is understood. God is no longer seen in creation; creation is seen in God. Ultimate relations are interpersonal relations, and the ultimate meaning of the whole cosmic process is seen in the light of the personal relations that emerge. It is our own contingent being as persons in relation that takes theology out of impersonal abstraction and thrusts all thought into an existential situation in which all relations are personal relations. As the human body becomes personalized with the human person whose instrument it is, so the creation becomes a personalized instrument of the Creator in the cosmic process. The I-It becomes I-Thou.

The common assumption that confines the fall to man overlooks the obvious fact that disorders in the creation along with

15 Emile Male, *The Gothic Image*, tr. Dora Nussey (New York: Harper, 1958).

16 Arthur O. Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950), p. 52.

17 A. N. Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World*, p. 249. Quoted by Lovejoy, *op. cit.*, p. 333.

human disobedience is an empirical reality. Things would not be perfect if everyone joined a back-to-nature movement and followed the rule of letting nature take its course. If nature took its course in sex, prolific procreation would turn society into a massive starving society. This is part of the glaring error in the Roman Catholic resistance to birth control.

As these words are written, news comes that four thousand people, in less than ten minutes, were buried beneath an avalanche in Peru. The creation is not essentially evil; it is a good that has been corrupted and distorted by sin. "Nature is not only glorious; it is also tragic. It is subjected to the laws of finitude and destruction. It is suffering and sighing with us. No one who has ever listened to the sounds of nature with sympathy can forget their tragic melodies."<sup>18</sup> "The truly biblical doctrine is that the physical world of Nature is *basically good but distorted by sin*, in very much the same way as human spiritual nature is, so that Nature and mankind *both* stand in need of, and are capable of, redemption."<sup>19</sup>

The biblical doctrine of creation does question the natural order of things. The subjection of the *ktisis* (creation) to futility belongs to one of the most spiritual chapters in the Scriptures (Rom. 8:18-25), and it is not possible to dismiss it as a vestige of "unspiritual apocalyptic." It is concern for the disorder and injustices in creation, manifested in unbalanced human suffering, that questions creation in its present state. It belongs to man's vocation now and man's salvation ultimately that disorders of human environment, as well as disobedience of the human will, be brought into harmony with the sovereign grace of a good God.

The present longing (Rom. 8:19) is described with a word which means "to hold out the head, to stretch the neck, in order to observe and keep on the watch in anxious expectation of what one may perhaps see or discover" (*apokaradokia*).<sup>20</sup> "The mystical sympathy of physical nature with the work of grace is beyond the comprehension of most of us. But can we

18 Paul Tillich, *The Shaking of the Foundations* (New York: Scribner's, 1948), p. 81.

19 John Wren-Lewis, "Christian Morality and the Idea of a Cosmic Fall," *Expository Times*, LXXI (April 1960), 205.

20 Franz J. Leenhardt, *The Epistle to the Romans*, tr. Harold Knight (London: Lutterworth, 1961), p. 219.

disprove it?"<sup>21</sup> "He is thinking of the inner anxiety, of the conflict and division at the very center of our being, of what we have spoken of as our 'brokenness', the struggle with a threatening meaninglessness, the 'waiting' in which, even if there should be hope, there is also unremitting pain."<sup>22</sup> Through sufferings God's sons, like God's Son, are brought through the painful cosmic process of a fallen creation into the perfection of perfect harmony and heavenly glory. It is the event of eschatological revelation (II Thess. 1:7; I Cor. 1:7; Rom. 2:5; 16:25).

A past subjection (Rom. 8:20) accounts for this present longing: "the creation was subjected to futility." The third curse in Genesis 3:14-19 includes a cursing of creation:

Cursed is the ground because of you;  
in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life;  
thorns and thistles it shall bring forth to you;  
and you shall eat the plants of the field.

II Esdras 7:11f. is an apocalyptic bridge between the Old Testament and the New Testament, but Paul has taken the cosmic fall to the depths. Man together with his cosmic environment stands in need of redemption.

The hope of future freedom (Rom. 8:21) fills the empty and meaningless process of the present age with the presence and purpose that belong to the age to come. It seems quite impossible to confine this deliverance to the rational realm, for "the whole creation" is restricted to the non-rational.<sup>23</sup> It is that which is other than man and with which man, without redemption, suffers a broken betrothal. "Men prefer to rape the universe rather than to be wedded in organic unity with it."<sup>24</sup>

The *ktisis* (*creation*), which according to Paul is in subjection to futility, is in John a system (*kosmos*) in hostility to God. "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world passes away, and the lust of it;

21 A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Nashville: Sunday School Board, 1931), IV, 375.

22 John Knox, *Life in Christ Jesus* (Greenwich: Seabury, 1961), p. 103.

23 John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959), I, 301f.

24 Galloway, *op. cit.*, p. 246.

but he who does the will of God abides for ever" (I John 2: 15-17). The content of the cosmos brings it into crisis (*krisis*) with God (John 3:14-21), and this is the process of judgment.

### THE FREEDOM OF CREATION

Man was created "a living soul," an organic unity of the breath of God and the dust of the earth (Gen. 2:8). His organic relation to the whole of creation is so real that biblical theology is unable to think of a complete redemption that does not include "the whole creation" (Rom. 8:22), earth as well as man and the animals. One of the leading Old Testament theologians of the past generation, speaking of the vivid visions of a future transformation of nature, has spoken the solid truth: "These pictures are to be taken realistically, not allegorically; if they seem strangely impossible to us, it is partly because we come to nature with an inveterate prejudice in favor of its fixity and virtual independence of God."<sup>25</sup>

Cosmic redemption presupposes the possibility that creation may be transformed by the same activity from which it finds its source and sustenance. The Redeemer is the Creator and Preserver of "all things." To rule out this possibility is to rule out miracle, and to rule out miracle is to rule out God. We believe in miracles because we believe in God, and belief in "God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth," is the solid rock on which the doctrine of cosmic redemption rests. In the most realistic way we believe that "the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom. 8:21).

What then is meant by miracle, this transforming activity of God? The terms used for miracle, the very vocabulary of Holy Scripture, make manifest the meaning of miracle. A miracle is first of all a power (*dunamis*), a mighty deed or work in which supernatural activity changes the course of creation and the currents of history. It is also a wonder (*teras*), an awesome event that leaves the human participant in the grasp of the incomprehensible glory of God. It is supremely a sign (*sēmeion*), a transformation of creation and history that has significance beyond the event itself. It points to the living God, the ground of all being and the sovereign over all. In summary, miracles

25 H. Wheeler Robinson, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

are works (*erga* in John's Gospel) that reveal the power and purpose of God.

Miracles may be on any level of encounter between the Creator and His creation. Some may be primarily supernatural events that change the order of creation, the so-called nature miracles of Moses, Elijah, Elisha, and Jesus. Others may be miracles of healing of body or mind or both, the type found most frequently in the ministry of Jesus. Israel, Christ, and the Church are miracles of history, a complex of events in which the clue to God's purpose, from creation to consummation, is disclosed.

The truth of miracles is not ruled out by the facts of scientific investigation. The closed system of causal connection has been shaken by science itself. Even in the realm of physics there is talk of a law of indeterminacy, and it is scientific dogmatism to rule out the unexpected. Natural selection no longer rules supreme in organic science, and whole systems of thought are built around belief in the emergence of the new. Psychological behaviorism is widely recognized as a vestigial wonder that would change free and responsible man into a meaningless machine. This "open universe" does not prove miracle, but neither does it rule out miracle on *a priori* grounds. Belief in miracle is based on man's encounter with God, sovereign and free, on whom man and the whole creation depend for source and sustenance. If God brings His creation into being He can bring it to its consummation.

Miracles are signs of the new creation breaking into the old order that has been corrupted by sin and is in "bondage to decay" (Rom. 8:21). The moving metaphors of Holy Scripture suggest the splendor of this consummation and the sordid corruption of the present creation. The consummation is a new order and a new creation, even a new heaven and a new earth.

*The New Order.* The new creation is a new order, a regeneration that is both personal and cosmic (Tit. 3:5; Matt. 19:28). Personal regeneration is a rebirth (*palingenesia*), a radical transformation of the human soul, wrought by the grace of God, that is at once a bath that washes clean from defilement and renews to spiritual life by the Holy Spirit. Cosmic regeneration is likewise a transformation that inaugurates and consummates the new order of Christ. Cosmic judgment accompanies cosmic redemption. The transformation has its be-

ginning in historical revelation, but the consummation includes the cosmic also. The transformation of the Stoic concept does not exclude the Stoic insight into the cosmic process.

The new order is also a restoration. Malachi 4:5f. promised that Elijah the prophet would restore "the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers," and this promise is raised as a question in Mark 9:12 (cf. Matt. 17:11). This longing lingered in the minds of the disciples, as the question in Acts 1:6 indicates, and this pre-tribulation prophecy is in the background of Peter's call to repentance in Acts 3:19-21. Yet the question is raised as to whether the famous phrase *apokatastaseōs pantōn* (establishment or restoration of all) does not have cosmic as well as historical content.

H. A. Guy eliminates the cosmic connotations, even doubting that there is a *parousia* expectation in the passage.<sup>26</sup> It would seem, however, that the reception in heaven ("whom heaven must receive") before the "establishment of all" would require two events, two coming of the Christ.

As to the meaning of *apokatastaseōs pantōn*, F. F. Bruce has taken the view that it is identical with the *palingenesia* (re-generation) of Matthew 19:28 and that "the idea of restoration is not excluded" because "the final inauguration of the new age is accompanied by the renovation of all nature."<sup>27</sup>

God's new order is above all a rest (Heb. 3:14-13). On the basis of Psalm 95:7-11 the subtle symbolism of Hebrews moves majestically from the exodus as a type to the Sabbath as a type. In Deuteronomy 5:12-15 the Sabbath is a celebration of the exodus, and the typology of a second exodus (Isa. 51:9-11; I Cor. 5:7; 10:2; Luke 9:31; II Pet. 1:13-15) leads logically to a future Sabbath rest. All who maintain their confession (*homologia*, Heb. 3:1) or confidence (*parrēsia*, 3:14) "share in a heavenly call," "share in Christ," and they are exhorted to "hold fast," or "hold firm" lest "an evil, unbelieving heart" lead them "to [apostatize] from the living God" (3:12). Faith is the title deed to the promised land (11:1).

Cosmic considerations enter by appeal to God's Sabbath rest in Genesis 2:2 (Heb. 4:4). Two days typify the future Sabbath rest. The first day (Heb. 4:1-5) is the age of the old covenant and the law, in which Moses the servant of God is God's spokes-

26 *The New Testament Doctrine of 'Last Things'* (London: Oxford University Press, 1948), pp. 90f.

27 *The Book of Acts* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1954), p. 91, n. 36.

man, but this did not enable the household of God to enter the rest. Psalm 95:7-11, written much later, is evidence against any such claim. The second day (Heb. 4:6-10) is the age of the new covenant and the gospel, in which Jesus is God's spokesman (1:1f.), and this new covenant will be consummated with a new creation. God spoke of "another day" (4:8) because no rest was reached in the day of Joshua. "So then, there remains a sabbath rest for the people of God; for whoever enters God's rest also ceases from his labors as God did from his" (4:10).

The cosmic Christology of Hebrews will not allow us to confine this redemption to human history. God's spokesman in the new age is God's speech. Christ is God's Word, "living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart" (4:12). "He reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature, upholding the universe by his word of power" (1:3). He is the one "for whom all things (*ta panta*) and by whom all things *ta panta* exist" (2:10). "By faith we understand that the world was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was made out of things which do not appear" (11:3). In the new creation He has prepared for the faithful, the "strangers and exiles on the earth," "a homeland" in "a better country" in which "he has prepared for them a city" (11:13-16).

*The New Creation.* The new order is a new creation, a re-creation. Christ the Redeemer is Christ the Creator. The bipartite confession in I Timothy 2:5f. expresses belief in Christ Jesus as the "one mediator" between the "one God" and men, but an earlier bipartite confession conceives clearly that the relation between the "one God the Father" and the "one Lord Jesus Christ" makes the person manifest in the flesh of Jesus, the one mediator of creation (I Cor. 8:6):

We, however, have one God the Father,  
from Whom are all things, and we to Him,  
and one Lord Jesus Christ,  
through Whom are all things, and we through Him.<sup>28</sup>

Over "the present evil age" rules "the god of this age" who "has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the

28 J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds* (London: Longmans, Green, 1950), p. 19.

likeness of God" (II Cor. 4:4). Christ as the image of God recalls the original creation of man in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:26), suggesting that the new creation, surpassing the old, is ruled by one who truly reflects the glory of God. As God commanded the light to shine out of the darkness at the beginning (Gen. 1:3), so, in the new creation that inaugurates the end, God "has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ" (II Cor. 4:6).

The cosmic implications of this new creation are heard in the declaration: "Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation" (II Cor. 5:17-19). This is more than some individualistic or even social reconciliation to God. It is the world (*kosmos*), the corrupted creation (*ktisis*), that is reconciled to God through Him who became an offering for sin. Cosmic reconciliation corresponds to cosmic creation and cosmic corruption.

The cosmic concept of reconciliation in the new creation has a corporate corollary in the idea of the new man. Christians are commanded to put off the old man with his practices and to "put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator" (Col. 3:9f.). This "one new man" is the "one body," not some isolated individual (Eph. 2:15f.). Corporate redemption in the "one body" of Christ is consummated in the cosmic redemption of the new creation. The new man belongs to the new creation in the new age, as the old man belongs to "the old" in "the present evil age."

The new creation is also reconciliation. The luminous liturgical poem preserved in Colossians 1:15-20 is the most comprehensive statement of the cosmic relations of Christ.<sup>29</sup> On the basis of Eduard Schweizer's recent reconstruction the relations are remarkable.<sup>30</sup>

29 A detailed formal analysis that leaves only two strophes is offered by James M. Robinson in the *Journal of Biblical Literature*, LXXV (December 1957), 270-287.

30 In *New Testament Studies*, VIII (October 1961), 6ff.

The first stanza (vv. 15f.) depicts Christ as the mediator of creation, as already noted in I Corinthians 8:6. With comments in parentheses and the references to the Creator and Saviour of all things italicized, the following arrangement may be made:

*He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation, for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, (visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities) through him and for him all things have been created.*

In Egypt Tutankhamen was called "the living image of Amen," Ptolemy "the living image of Zeus," and Pharaoh was "Horus, Son of Unseen Osiris"; but the firstborn recalls the Hebraic belief that the first place belonged to the firstborn (Exod. 4:22; Jer. 31:9; Ps. 89:27). Christ is the visible manifestation of the invisible God, but He is also the mediator of the whole creation, not a creature because "all things" (*ta panta*) were created "in him," "through him," and "for him." He again is the one "for whom and by whom all things exist" (Heb. 2:10). There is no creature Christology here. He is Creator, the "one mediator" of the "one God."

The intermediate stanza (Col. 1:17f.) speaks of cosmic cohesion of "all things" in Christ, the preserver and sustainer who is "before all things" and "head of the body." Only "the body" calls for comment in this part:

*And it is he who is before all things, and in him all things hold together, and it is he who is the head of the body (the Church).*

Cosmic and corporate wholeness belong to Him.

The last stanza (vv. 18b, 19f.) is a parallel with the first, but the mediator of creation is now declared to be the mediator of reconciliation.

*He is the beginning, the firstborn of the dead (that in everything he might be pre-eminent) for in him all the fulness was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to him all things (whether on earth or in heaven, making peace through the blood of his cross).*

At the beginning was the Eternal Son of God, and He holds first place as "the firstborn of the dead," in the realm of

reconciliation as well as in the realm of creation. Over creation and over death He has supreme command. The primate (*prototokos*, firstborn) has primacy (*proteuōn*, pre-eminence). All supernatural and creative powers (the *plēroma*, fullness) dwell in Him, as there is no need to worship any other (Col. 2:8-23). Again and again it should be remembered that "all things" (*ta panta*) in creation and in reconciliation are related to Christ.

Another feature of the new creation is that which has come to be called recapitulation, using the term as it has come to be associated with Irenaeus' interpretation of Ephesians 1:10. Ephesians 1:8-14 is a Trinitarian prayer, perhaps a baptismal *berakah* (benediction), blessing the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit for the benefits of redemption.<sup>31</sup> Words of comment explain that God plans "to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth" (1:10). "All things" in Ephesians (1:10f., 20-22; 4:10), as in Colossians 1:15-20, means all that God has created, and God has this purpose because He is the "one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all" (Eph. 4:6).

The infinitive *anakephalaiōsasthai* (to unite) has reference to the restoration of the original unity of all creation, disrupted by demonic and destructive powers, now in the process by which the corporate unity of the Church is consummated in the cosmic unity of creation.<sup>32</sup> Personal and social estrangement are involved in a cosmic estrangement of the creation from the Creator, so the act of God in Christ, by which reconciliation is accomplished, is also personal, social, and cosmic.

Irenaeus of Lyon also thought of recapitulation as a return to the original unity of creation through the activity of God in Christ, in the incarnation, the Church, and in the final consummation when Christ the recapitulation of righteousness overcomes Antichrist as the recapitulation of evil.<sup>33</sup> From creation to consummation God has a purpose made manifest in Christ and made perfect in glory. If this be God's ultimate

31 A formal analysis is done by J. Coutts in *New Testament Studies*, III, 115-127.

32 Franz Mussner, *Christus das All und die Kirche* (Trier: Paulinus Verlag, 1955), p. 66.

33 Gustaf Wingren, *Man and the Incarnation*, tr. Ross Mackenzie (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1959), pp. 187f.

intention, all disruptive and schismatic efforts in the Church or in the whole creation are out of harmony with the will of God.

*The New Heaven and New Earth.* God's new order and new creation, described as "a new heaven and a new earth," is a consummation after cataclysm when "the first heaven and the first earth had passed away" (Rev. 21:1). Such is the vision of John the seer.

The seer's gaze is now at last fixed on the furthest point of his vision; his eye dwells on the perfection of a new creation, wherein God's agelong purposes are consummated, in the eternal bliss of the loyal. The old order has entirely vanished away, we must emphasize that it is essentially the old *order* of things, vitiated as it was by every conceivable evil, material and spiritual, which has disappeared. It is unnecessary and misleading to wander into speculations about the cosmic processes assumed by John in the summoning into being of a new order of things after the judgment. For although a radical refashioning of the universe is undoubtedly in the background of his thought, it is spiritual rebirth which he tried to describe.<sup>34</sup>

With this emphasis one can agree, but it should be also emphasized that "a radical refashioning of the universe" is essential to complete "spiritual rebirth." Even now in this present evil age the transformation has begun, "for the form of this world is passing away" (I Cor. 7:31).

The positive consummation has as its corollary the negative picture of a cosmic cataclysm. The destruction of Noah's world by the great deluge is evidence that smooth continuity does not rule supreme in all human history and divine judgment. In answer to the scoffers, II Peter 3:5-7 warns:

They deliberately ignore this fact, that by the word of God heavens existed long ago, and an earth formed out of water and by means of water, through which the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist have been stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

This cosmic cataclysm is not the true *telos* (end) of creation and redemption. Patiently, and with detachment from the

<sup>34</sup> Martin Kiddle, *The Revelation of St. John* (New York: Harper, 1940), pp. 409f.

passing world, the righteous are recalled to God's eternal purpose and promise (3:11-13).

Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of persons ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be kindled and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire! But according to his promise we wait for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

Judgment is never the ultimate purpose in the ways of God. Beyond cataclysm is consummation, beyond woe there is weal in the wonders of the Holy City of God.

A comprehensive theology of cosmic redemption, related in detail to modern scientific knowledge, has seldom been attempted on a satisfactory scale. Among ancient Christian writers the daring system of Origen in the third century suggests how revolutionary this type of eschatology can become, but the failure to comprehend the whole cosmic order is always an abbreviation of the biblical perspective. Despite the philosophical and scientific inadequacies of Origen's thought, he stands out as the most courageous theologian in the early Church.<sup>35</sup>

Cosmic fall and cosmic redemption were corollaries for Origen. An original unity of all things is posited, but from this state of blessedness some angelic and all human creatures have fallen into a state of defection and loss (*De prin. I.IV*). This loss is both cosmic and human, and all must pass through a process of punishment and moral education before restoration to the primeval harmony of the whole.

Redemption as well as the fall is not confined to man. The redemptive process moves toward a consummation, described as a conflagration, but it is a fire of purification rather than a destructive cataclysm. "For the end is always like the beginning; as therefore there is one end of all things, so we must understand that there is one beginning of all things, and as there is one end of many things, so from one beginning arise many differences and varieties, which in turn are restored, through God's goodness, through their subjection to

<sup>35</sup> A good summary of his eschatology as a whole is in R. P. C. Hanson, *Allegory and Event* (London: SCM, 1959), pp. 333-356.

Christ and their unity with the Holy Spirit, to one end, which is like the beginning" (I.VI.2).<sup>36</sup>

It is unfortunate that presuppositions influenced by the Stoic ideas of immanent and impersonal reason, together with Platonic dualism and universalism, limited the thrust of Origen's cosmic eschatology, but the movement from a transcendent unity of all things which is the beginning to an ultimate harmony that is the end (*telos*) belongs to an eschatology of basic monotheism.<sup>37</sup> Any confinement of redemption to man alone, to the exclusion of the rest of the cosmic order, is an eclipse of biblical eschatology. Ultimate harmony, as has been pointed out, does not lead necessarily to universal salvation, but it does lead to the elimination of all disorder and disobedience in the arena of God's glory.

Among modern philosophical theologians Hegel has revived the comprehensiveness that belongs to cosmic redemption.<sup>38</sup> But as Origen attempted to overcome the dualism inherent in the Gnostic system, so Hegel fell heir to the antinomies of reason and the dualism of the noumenal and phenomenal that was the legacy of Kant.

In the *Phenomenology of Mind* a movement of diremption is traced from an original thesis in which subject and object are one in the Absolute Spirit, through an antithesis of self and not-self, or "this" subject and "this" object, to an ultimate synthesis in the Absolute Spirit. The unity of the Father and the Son in the Spirit is the ground of ultimate unity between the Creator and the creation, God and man.

Cosmic redemption overcomes cosmic diremption in a unity that transcends the dichotomy of subject and object, but there the idealistic principle of identity, removing as it does the personal distinction between God and man and the ontological distinction between God and the world, weakened Hegel's conclusions as much as Stoic immanence made difficulties for Origen. The process absorbs into God, in undifferentiated unity, that which in biblical faith is an incorporation of the parts into a larger whole in which God is "all in all" (I Cor. 15:28).

36 G. W. Butterworth, *Origen on First Principles* (London: S.P.C.K., 1936), p. 53.

37 Galloway, *op. cit.*, pp. 84-98.

38 *Ibid.*, pp. 156-185.

A third effort to formulate a theology of cosmic redemption is evident in Karl Heim's six volumes on *Der evangelische Glaube und das Denken der Gegenwart* (*The Evangelical Faith and the Thought of the Present*), especially in the volume on *Weltschöpfung und Weltende*. He views both the disobedience of man and the discords of the world as a manifestation of a cosmic rift that has plunged creation into a condition of polarity, a situation in which one group survives by the destruction of others. Even the vegetable kingdom, devoured by omnivorous men and beasts, is involved in this destructive polarity.<sup>39</sup>

God alone, who has made victory manifest in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, will ultimately overcome conflict between the objective past and the subjective present by a deliverance of his creation into an eternal consummation in which all relations are personal (subject-subject) relations and only the realm of the present, the eternal now, reigns. It is one of the monumental and astonishing accomplishments of modern thought that Heim has combined a saintly piety and keen scientific perception in his appeal to a supra-polar dimension, which to him is the living God of the Christian faith.

Is it possible to harmonize the New Testament hope of a new creation with the views adopted by modern science? The answer to this question will be conditioned by one's concepts of both Scripture and science. For the present author, especially in this chapter, the tension between Scripture and science is a creative one that generates no personal pain.

This chapter presupposes that at one point in space-time the energy that has become concrete matter came into being by an act of God. At a second point life appeared, first plant and then animal, and this too was the creative act of God, who never withdraws His presence from His creation. A third unique point in the creative process saw the appearance of mind, the transcendence of the human spirit over the process of nature. The greatest point in the historical movements which followed was that unique point in which "the Word

39 Karl Heim, *The World: Its Creation and Consummation*, tr. Robert Smith (Edinburgh and London: Oliver and Boyd, 1962).

became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14), when "God sent forth his Son, born of woman" (Gal. 4:4).

All of these points have been unique, never to be repeated, and on the basis of these events we hope for yet a higher demension of the spirit, which transforms all matter, life, and mind in an event that can only be described as the New Jerusalem. This is the event toward which the process of the whole creation and human history, especially salvation history, point. It is then that the contradictions of creation and the ambiguities of history will be clarified and consummated.

## *Chapter Ten*

### The Holy City

IN THE MIDST of gathering gloom, when men tire and civilization begins to crumble, God has a way of stirring man's hope by a vision of an invisible city that will not pass away. Plato, without the lens of Holy Writ but pondering the eternal, spoke of "the city whose home is in the ideal," the pattern of which is "laid up in heaven for him who wishes to contemplate it and so beholding to constitute himself its citizen" (*Republic* IX, 592, tr. Shorey).

Augustine, drawing insight from the Scriptures as well as from Plato, sees two cities: "These two cities are made by two loves: the earthly city by the love of self unto the contempt of God, and the heavenly city by the love of God unto the contempt of self" (*The City of God*, XIV, 28). The vision seems never to vanish completely, even though, as at times in Augustine, it is dimmed by the tendency to identify the heavenly city with historical institutions of church or state.

Modern history has often followed the medieval dreamers, even when some transformed the dream into the nightmare of the secular state. Sir Thomas More, modeling his *Utopia* after the external frame of Plato's *Republic*, protested against the perfidy of politics in the interest of an ideal community that would produce good citizens and men of intellectual and moral freedom, honest labor, and a society free from luxury and poverty.

Martin Butzer's *De Regno Christi* (1557) outlines a plan for the "solid restitution" of the kingdom of God in England by the reorganization of public and national life in obedience to the gospel of Christ. In the next century Valentin Andrea, German theologian from Tübingen, proposed a similar society in his *Christianopolis* (1619).

Long before Karl Marx published his secular version of a communistic society in *Das Kapital* (1867), the Italian monk Tomaso Campanella, on mystical grounds far removed from Marx's materialism, was concerned with a communistic society in his *Civitas solis* (The City of the Sun, 1623). The appeal of modified Marxism to the multitudes today should be evidence to all that the dream never dies, and the secular version will continue to demand loyalty until men find a higher loyalty in the Holy City, "the New Jerusalem which comes down from my God out of heaven" (Rev. 3:12).

God took Israel and the Church through three stages (the earthly Jerusalem, the heavenly Jerusalem, and the new Jerusalem) to teach the faithful that man's undying dream of a Holy City is not a delusion and a snare but the Omega point toward which redeemed men, salvation history, and the whole creation move.

#### THE EARTHLY JERUSALEM

*As the Abode of God's name.* Jerusalem as the earthly symbol of God's abode with His people finds expression in both the "Name" theology and the "Glory" theology of the Old Testament.<sup>1</sup> The Name theology is associated with Shechem, the shrine for the old amphictyony of Israel long before Jerusalem became the holy city (Deut. 27:12ff.). In ancient times the presence of God was signified by an altar in the place where God caused his "name to be remembered" (Exod. 20:24). At other places the ark of the Lord was understood as a type of visible throne for the invisible God (Num. 10:35f.; I Sam. 4:4; II Kings 19:15).

Jeremiah (3:16f.) prophesied of the time when Jerusalem would displace the ark as "the throne of the Lord," and this is the theme of Deuteronomy, the central source of the Name theology.

The distinction between the ark as the throne of the Lord and the city of Jerusalem as such is verbalized in the prophetic vision of Jeremiah: "At that time Jerusalem shall be called the throne of the Lord, and all nations shall gather to it, to the presence of the Lord in Jerusalem, and they shall no more

<sup>1</sup> Gerhard von Rad, *Studies in Deuteronomy*, tr. David Stalker (London: SCM, 1953), pp. 37-44. Backgrounds are discussed in detail by Roland de Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, tr. John McHugh (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961), pp. 271-344.

stubbornly follow their own evil heart" (3:17; cf. 14:21; 17:12). The ark, removed at some time around the fall of the city, would not figure in the future. "Jerusalem shall be called the throne of the Lord."

The pillar passage on Jerusalem, "the place" where the Lord would "put his name and make his habitation," is Deuteronomy 12. The chapter begins with an appeal for the people to "destroy all the places where the nations whom you shall dispossess served their gods, upon the high mountains and upon the hills and under every green tree" (12:2). They are to "destroy their name out of that place" (12:3). Only one central sanctuary is to be tolerated as the place of Israelite worship. In the time of the judges Shiloh had been the central sanctuary, but this was destroyed by the Philistines. David erected a new tabernacle in Jerusalem, later superseded by the temple of Solomon, but the numerous pagan sanctuaries threatened the true worship of the one God revived by Hezekiah and Josiah. The tug of theological war between the worship of the Lord and the worship of various Canaanite deities made Jerusalem the historical symbol of God's abode among his people.

Israel is commanded: "But you shall seek the place which the Lord your God will choose out of all your tribes to put his name and make his habitation there" (12:5). When the Lord chooses to "put his name" in Jerusalem He has also chosen to "make his habitation there." The noun "habitation" (*shekhen*) occurs nowhere else in the Old Testament, but the idea is the same as that expressed later: "to make his name dwell there" (12:11). The name "tabernacle" is used here much in the sense of the tabernacling presence of the *Shekinah* in later Hebrew thought.<sup>2</sup> Jerusalem is "the place" (12:5,11,14,18,21,26).

A second example of Name theology that makes of the earthly Jerusalem a heavenly symbol is found in Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple (I Kings 8:22-53). Solomon's prayer that the temple may always be the place to which Israel may turn for the forgiveness of sins conceives of God as beyond all the limits of heaven and earth (8:27):

But will God indeed dwell on the earth?  
Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain thee;  
how much less this house which I have built!

<sup>2</sup> See my article on *Shekinah* in *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (New York: Abingdon, 1962).

The words recall Deuteronomy 10:14 ("Behold, to the Lord your God belong heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth with all that is in it"), but the Lord overflows both.

The Lord God, whom "the highest heaven cannot contain," has promised: "My name shall be there" (I Kings 8:29), i.e., in "the place" that is the temple of Jerusalem. It is not difficult to see how this Name theology made the temple such a symbol of security, even if it was a false security. Jeremiah was one of the few who was able to see the great reality of God beyond the earthly symbol. His temple sermon (Jer. 7:1-15), one of the most crucial and courageous events in his life, blasts the belief expressed in the deceptive words: "This is the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord" (7:4). The rebel prophet renounced such false security and called on the people to find security in the inward reality of a transformed heart and life. Shiloh, the ancient sanctuary eighteen miles to the north, was no security against the Philistines. Security is in the Lord who says: "Go now to my place that was in Shiloh, where I made my name dwell at first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel" (7:12). The earthly symbol had given the people an edifice complex that only tragedy could transform.

*As the Abode of God's Glory.* The second stage in the developing symbol of the earthly Jerusalem may be seen in the Glory theology. This "southern" theology, associated perhaps with Hebron, blossoms in Ezekiel's vision of an eschatological Jerusalem (Ezek. 40-48). The eschatological Jerusalem is to be understood against the background of the earthly Jerusalem which was viewed as the center of the nations: "This is Jerusalem; I have set her in the center of the nations, with countries round about her" (Ezek. 5:5). In one vision (43:1-5) the Lord's glory returns to the temple: "And behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the east; and the sound of his coming was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with his glory" (43:2). Twenty years before, Ezekiel had a vision of the departure of God's glory from the temple (10:1-22; 11:22f.), but now as of old the temple is flooded with the glory of God. Ezekiel testifies: "As the glory of the Lord entered the temple by the gate facing east, the Spirit lifted me up, and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the Lord filled the temple" (43:4f.).

The Lord spoke to Ezekiel from the inner sanctuary to ex-

plain to him that the eschatological temple was to be His eternal abode with His people. The conception of dwelling is seen in the descent of the *Kabod* (glory) from heaven that God may never leave His people. God says to Ezekiel: "Son of man, this is the place of my throne and the place of the soles of my feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the people of Israel for ever" (43:7).

The name of the eschatological Jerusalem will be *Yahweh-shammah* (the Lord is there, 48:35), and the priestly picture does not obscure the fact that this eschatological Jerusalem is the incorporation of His people into God himself. It was not easy for the Israelites to see beyond the earthly symbol to the eschatological reality, but the vision of the heavenly hope did not die in Babylon. Haggai set out to restore the temple to its former glory, but the God who brought Israel out of Egypt will yet perform the eschatological event of which God promises: "Once again, in a little while, I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, so that the treasures of all nations shall come in, and I will fill this house with splendor, says the Lord of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, says the Lord of hosts. The latter splendor of this house shall be greater than the former, says the Lord of hosts; and in this place I will give prosperity, says the Lord of hosts" (Hag. 2:6-9). Jerusalem is "this place" where the glory and splendor of God will be made known — the eschatological Jerusalem, the place of endless *shalom* (prosperity, peace).

To Zechariah the promise is made (Zech. 8:3): "I will return to Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem, and Jerusalem shall be called the faithful city, and the mountain of the Lord of hosts, the holy mountain" (cf. 2:10).

God dwells in heaven, but He descends to dwell with His people. One of the most notable examples of "the paradox of grace" in the Old Testament, which expresses God's transcendence and immanence, remoteness and nearness, is the oracle on the divine dwelling place in Isaiah 57:15:

For thus says the high and lofty One  
    who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy:  
    "I dwell in the high and holy place,  
        and also with him who is of contrite and  
            humble spirit,  
    to revive the spirit of the humble,  
        and to revive the heart of the contrite."

No other call to worship and reverence binds God to His people more closely and brings more hope that He will ultimately dwell with His people for ever.

The Glory theology was kept alive by faith in this Holy One "in the high and holy place." The hope of an eschatological Jerusalem revives at the dawn of glory announced in the call (60:1).

Arise, shine; for your light has  
come,  
and the glory of the Lord has  
risen upon you.

The full splendor of this dawning glory is focused on the eschatological Jerusalem, of which the earthly one is but a frail symbol. The vision is real and the voice is sure in Isaiah 65:17f.:

"For behold, I create new heavens  
and a new earth;  
and the former things shall not be remembered  
or come into mind.  
But be glad and rejoice for ever  
in that which I create;  
for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing,  
and her people a joy."

Such visions are of a glory that only God can give from His throne in heaven to His children on His footstool on earth below (66:1).

As the earthly symbol of God's abode with His people, Jerusalem stirred feelings expressed in what has been called "Songs of Zion" (Ps. 48,84,87,122,126), sung by pilgrims as they made the journey to the sacred festivals with hopes of an ideal future and final glory. Psalm 48 speaks of Jerusalem as "the city of our God" (vv. 1,8) "the city of the great King," (v. 2) "the city of the Lord of hosts" (v. 8). There is God's "dwelling" and "house" (Ps. 84:1, 4; 122:1, 9). In the spirit of these pilgrims' Psalms, Isaac Watts sang:

The hill of Zion yields  
A thousand sacred sweets  
Before we reach the heavenly fields,  
Or walk the golden streets.

All this is symbolism, to be sure, but it symbolizes an ultimate reality that is awesome and sublime, a mystery before which men can only wonder and worship.

Jerusalem continued to be the symbol of God's dwelling among His people in apocalyptic thought. God promised through Joel (3:17) :

So you shall know that I am the Lord  
your God,  
who dwell in Zion, my holy mountain.  
And Jerusalem shall be holy  
and strangers shall never again pass  
through it.

An oracle at the end of Zechariah promises God's universal reign and true worship in the holy city of Jerusalem (14:16-21), and the angel Gabriel speaks of Jerusalem as the "holy city" (Dan. 9:24).

The New Testament has preserved a saying of Jesus that summarizes the Hebraic view of God's relation to heaven and earth and to the city of Jerusalem (Matt. 5:34f.) :

Do not swear at all,  
either by heaven,  
for it is the throne of God,  
or by the earth,  
for it is his footstool,  
or by Jerusalem,  
for it is the city of the great King.

God is the "great King," and Jerusalem is His city (cf. Ps. 48:2). It is therefore "the holy city" where our Lord, Jesus Christ, was tempted and died (Matt. 4:5; 27:53), but His death was the point of transition, in God's historical revelation, between the earthly city below and the heavenly city above.<sup>3</sup>

#### THE HEAVENLY JERUSALEM

The tension between the earthly symbol and the heavenly reality became taut after the death of Jesus in Jerusalem. Even before the fall of the city in A.D. 70, Paul put the two in strong contrast in his polemic against what he considered "another gospel" (Gal. 1:7). With the figure of God as Father of both his Son Jesus Christ, and his sons, the true Christians, he describes how we are delivered from slavery to sonship by God first sending forth His Son from heaven to earth, and

<sup>3</sup> J. C. De Young, *Jerusalem in the New Testament* (Kampen: J. H. Kok, 1960), pp. 76-116. The earthly city of Jerusalem, founded by David, is a type of the heavenly Jerusalem, founded by God, according to Augustine, *De Catechizandis Rudibus*, 20, 36.

then sending forth His Spirit into the hearts of His sons (4:1-7). Paul is alarmed lest the process be reversed and they turn from sonship back to slavery "to the weak and beggarly elemental spirits" (4:8-11). This is his travail for their souls (4:12-20).

*The Allegory of the Two Women.* The allegory of the two women, Hagar and Sarah as the two covenants, follows (Gal. 4:21-31), and the system of slavery advocated by Judaism is represented by Hagar, Sinai, and the present Jerusalem. But there is a heavenly Jerusalem, the Jerusalem above, which is free: "she is our mother" (4:26). With God as our Father and the heavenly Jerusalem as our mother we are free, and we should "stand fast therefore" and "not submit to a yoke of slavery" (5:1). Sarah has become the symbol of freedom as Hagar was the symbol of slavery.

Our mother, the heavenly Jerusalem, is not the Church, as Tertullian and Cyprian, Calvin and Luther all thought. We are unable to agree with Cyprian's use of the father and mother symbols when he declares: "No longer can he have God for his father who has not the Church for his mother."<sup>4</sup> He pushed the mother metaphor so far that he says: "It is of her womb that we are born, by her milk that we are nourished, by her breath that we live."<sup>5</sup> Calvin's comment on Galatians 4:26 makes the same mistake of identifying the heavenly Jerusalem with the Church. The Church is the body of Christ on earth, not the heavenly Jerusalem from above (*ano*). The heavenly Jerusalem is no more the Church, viewed as the pilgrim people upon the earth, than it is the earthly Jerusalem. It is heaven itself, the mother of all who are within the fellowship of the body of Christ.<sup>6</sup>

The heavenly Jerusalem is now "above," the abode of Christ. That is why Paul points away from human tradition to this heavenly realm of reality when he says: "If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on things that are on earth" (Col. 3:1f.). The Church is on earth, but she is called to give attention to the things of heaven. She may worship *with* the angels, but she must not

<sup>4</sup> *De Unitate Ecclesiae*, 6.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>6</sup> De Young, *op. cit.*, pp. 133f.

worship the angels and become in bondage again to "the elemental spirits of the universe" (2:20).

It is not necessary to demythologize and thus de-eschatologize the New Testament in order to make this transcendent and heavenly realm of freedom real to the so-called "modern man." F. F. Bruce has well commented on Colossians 3:1:

The apostles knew very well that they were using figurative language when they spoke of Christ's exaltation thus: they no more thought of a location on a literal throne at a literal right hand of God than we do. The static impression made by conventional artistic representations of such a literal enthronement of Christ is quite different from the dynamic New Testament conception.<sup>7</sup>

The Christian does give his supreme allegiance to this heavenly realm above. Of those who mind earthly things it is said: "Their end is destruction, their god is the belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things" (Phil. 3:19). Of us who set our minds on heavenly things it is very different: "Our commonwealth is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power which enables him even to subject all things to himself" (3:20). Heaven is, our home town, our native land.

To the Philippians as a "Roman colony" (Acts 16:12) and living in a political situation that often looked on Caesar, to whom many gave supreme allegiance, as Savior, with his capital city in Rome, it was meaningful to say that our supreme allegiance is in heaven. As citizens had their names enrolled in their native city, so the Christians have their names in "the book of life" (Phil. 4:3).

The political metaphor continues in the heavenly language of the Ephesian letter. "So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God" (Eph. 2:19). We are blessed "with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places" (1:3). God not only raised Christ "from the dead and made him sit at his right hand in the heavenly places," but He also "raised us up with him, and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (1:20; 2:6).

<sup>7</sup> E. K. Simpson and F. F. Bruce, *Commentary on the Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957), p. 258. Cf. De Young, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

Through the Church God plans to make known His manifold wisdom "to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places" (3:10), and it is in this heavenly realm that the spiritual warfare is waged "against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (6:12). The heavenly realm from "above" can become a spiritual reality "now," and ultimately the demonic powers will be defeated.

*The Typology of the Two Worlds.* The typology of the two worlds is a further illumination of the heavenly Jerusalem. Peter speaks of "an inheritance which is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven" (I Pet. 1:4) for those who are "aliens and exiles" (2:11) on the earth, but it is Hebrews that holds forth most hope for those "who share in a heavenly call" (Heb. 3:1) and look to the "heavenly sanctuary" (8:5). The higher order of the heavenly is blended into the future order of hope. "The heavenly tabernacle in Hebrews is not the product of Platonic idealism, but the eschatological temple of apocalyptic Judaism, the temple which is in heaven primarily in order that it may be manifested on earth."<sup>8</sup> The passion of the past and the *parousia* of the future are united by the high-priesthood of the present. "Thus it was necessary for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these rites, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ has entered, not into a sanctuary made with hands, a copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf" (Heb. 9:23f.). "We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner shrine behind the curtain" (6:19). The old ceremonies of the earthly Jerusalem were only a shadow of the heavenly Jerusalem and the heavenly sanctuary.

God is, first of all, the founder of the heavenly Jerusalem. It is not the creation and the achievement of man's labor, but *The Saints' Everlasting Rest*, as Richard Baxter's immortal classic called it, a rest that begins in grace and is consummated in glory. On Baxter's monument at Kidderminster are words descriptive of a fearless and faithful man of God sustained by grace and waiting for glory: "In a stormy and divided age he

<sup>8</sup> C. K. Barrett, "The Eschatology of the Epistle to the Hebrews," *The Background of the New Testament and Its Eschatology*, ed. W. D. Davies and David Daube (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), p. 389. Abundant sources are supplied in this essay.

advocated unity and comprehension, pointing the way to everlasting rest."

The biblical example of persevering faith is Abraham, and all his children inherit the heavenly Jerusalem. In Hebrews 11:8-10:

By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place which he was to receive as an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was to go. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked forward to the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

Abraham traveled from Mesopotamia toward a heavenly Jerusalem, transcending by far the earthly city of David and Solomon. The earthly city is only an immanent and visible sign of the transcendent reality that "has foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

God has prepared the city for a prepared people, a people that do not "shrink back unto perdition" but go on toward the city and "have faith unto the saving of the soul" (10:39, ASV).

These all died in faith, not having received what was promised, but having seen it and greeted it from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city (11:13-16).

Canaan is not their country (cf. 4:8). Their country is the heavenly homeland toward which faithful men journey to a destiny beyond the bounds of this transient land of shadows and shattered hopes. It belongs to the higher realm of God and to the coming age of glory.

God has, by His mercy and grace, called man forth to make this journey that makes life meaningful and destroys the dread of death. His promise is heard in faith, a faith which "is the assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen" (11:1). Assurance (*hupostasis*) is a title-deed, as the word was used in property transactions, and he who holds his title-deed inherits the heavenly city of God. The worst of all human tragedies is to see the lights of home, but die in the desert (6:4-6).

A second significant teaching has to do with the inhabitants of the heavenly Jerusalem. Although invisible now and visible only in the future, it is never far away from the faithful.

"But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to a judge who is God of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks more graciously than the blood of Abel" (Heb. 12:22-24). The heavenly city has never been an empty city, for it is the city of God and His angels, the heavenly abode of departed saints, and the hope of all who come to the end of life's pilgrim journey.

Heaven hovers low in Hebrews. With spiritual vision the early Christians knew that they joined the heavenly hosts of angels and the company of departed saints in worship. They did not worship angels and saints now in glory, who are ever active in the adoration of God, but they did join to worship with them when they assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus. In the celestial choir loft above, the heavenly beings led the congregation in the adoration of God (I Cor. 11:10). It is unfortunate that so many Protestants spend so much time protesting against what they believe to be the worship of the angels and the saints that they forget to worship *with* the angels and saints in glory. The angel forbade John to worship him, but he also said: "Worship God" (Rev. 19:10).

The final mention of the heavenly Jerusalem in Hebrews (13:14) speaks of its permanence. Here in the land of shadows below, men drop by the way in the desert sands if they lack the faith of Abraham. Time is a tent city of transient men moving across the nomadic wastelands of the world. Nothing seems to stay very long, and man gropes out into the great unknown that will not pass away. The saintly Newman spoke not from a shallow soul to say:

Lead, kindly Light, amid th' encircling gloom,  
Lead thou me on!  
The night is dark, and I am far from home;  
Lead thou me on!

He spoke with the sure words of a faith that did not fail in the crucial hour.

Jesus suffered outside the gate of the earthly Jerusalem, the transient city with the earthly tabernacle and temporal sacrifices.

It has now passed away and may never be rebuilt, but the heavenly Jerusalem that belongs to the eternal world will never pass away. "Therefore let us go forth to him outside the camp, bearing abuse for him. For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city which is to come" (Heb. 13:13f.). It is the city that belongs to the world above, but it also belongs to the world to come. The whole Church of God joins Bernard of Cluny in singing:

Jerusalem, the golden, With milk and honey blest!  
Beneath thy contemplation Sink heart and voice oppressed;  
I know not, O I know not What joys await me there;  
What radiancy of glory, What bliss beyond compare.

They stand, those halls of Zion, All jubilant with song,  
And bright with many an angel, And all the martyr throng;  
The Prince is ever in them; The daylight is serene;  
The pastures of the blessed Are decked in glorious sheen.

O sweet and blessed country, Shall I e'er see thy face?  
O sweet and blessed country, Shall I e'er win thy grace?  
Exult, O dust and ashes! The Lord shall be thy part;  
His only, His forever Thou shalt be, and thou art!<sup>19</sup>

Even the sorrows of the delay are not bitter when we remember His words who said (John 14:1f., NEB):

Set your troubled hearts at rest.  
Trust in God always;  
trust also in me.

There are many dwelling-places in my Father's house;  
if it were not so I should have told you;  
for I am going there on purpose to prepare a place for you.

The Holy City is the Father's house and the New Jerusalem.

#### THE NEW JERUSALEM

The new Jerusalem is the fulfillment of the forlorn hopes of the earthly Jerusalem and the faithful promises of the heavenly Jerusalem. Its newness is a newness never seen before. It is the new Jerusalem for those who have the "new name" and sing "a new song" in "a new heaven and a new earth." The very word for new (*kainos*) means a newness that is new in a new way.

<sup>19</sup> "Jerusalem the Golden." *The Broadman Hymnal*, no. 219. Cf. Peter Abelard's "O Quanta Qualia."

A new name is promised the conquerors in the church of Philadelphia. "He who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God; never shall he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem which comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name" (Rev. 3:12). The name is identified in 19:12, 16. A name stands for personal identity and reality, and to write one's name on another means personal possession and relation. This threefold name establishes a personal relation between the conquerors and God, the city of God with a temple of living souls incorporated into Christ, and Christ Himself. All relations in the new Jerusalem are personal relations to God, human beings, and Christ. No "person" is a "thing" in the new Jerusalem. Personal relation to Christ protects in the hour of trial (3:10) and provides access to the Holy City through the open door of the new David's new Jerusalem (3:7f.).

A new song is sung by the martyrs "who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads" (14:1). These martyrs are the servants of God on whose foreheads a seal was set, just as blood was sprinkled on the doorposts at the first Passover, to protect them from the plagues of judgment soon to come upon the earth (7:3). The saints or martyrs are removed from earth before the *parousia* in 19:11-16 only by death. They are no more raptured from earth before the tribulation, than Israel was taken from Egypt before the ten plagues. A parallel may be seen in Ezekiel 9:1-8, where the righteous are sealed before the destruction of the earthly Jerusalem. The martyrs on Mount Zion (Rev. 14:3) join the multitude of 7:10 in singing a new song, perhaps "the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb," saying,

Great and wonderful are thy deeds,  
O Lord God the Almighty!  
Just and true are thy ways,  
O King of the ages!  
Who shall not fear and glorify thy name, O Lord?  
For thou alone art holy.  
All nations shall come and worship thee,  
for thy judgments have been revealed (15:3f.).

The new Jerusalem in "a new heaven and a new earth" (21:1f.) is the ultimate destiny and redeemed environment in which those with the new name sing the new song. There the voice

from God on His throne states: "Behold I make all things new" (21:5).

A German theologian and church historian, born of Jewish parents and destined to be the father of modern church history, changed his last name from Mendel to Neander (the Greek for new man) when he received Christian baptism in 1806. This symbolizes in some ways what happens to every person who takes up the cross to follow the Lamb of God wherever He may lead. He leads ultimately to the Holy City, the realm of redeemed relations where all relations are personal — the "it-less" universe in which all is "thou," where the name makes newness and the song is without discord.

All of this, as the author of Revelation knew far better than modern literalists, is religious symbolism, but it is the symbolism of a real relation in which all the redeemed are incorporated into the Holy City of God. There will be no separate suburbs, "that God may be all in all" (I Cor. 15:28, KJV). Then as now, in the body of Christ, "Christ is all, and in all" (Col. 3:11). This is not pantheism, in which all is absorbed in God, but *panentheism*, in which all created "things" are so incorporated into the being of God that all relations are personal relations. Revelation 21:1-22:5 symbolizes this spiritual symphony in three ways: a tabernacle, a city, and a garden.<sup>10</sup>

*The Tabernacle of God.* The tabernacle (Rev. 21:2-4) symbolizes eternal fellowship between God and His people, and is God's answer to the problem of human loneliness and estrangement. Indeed, lonely and God-forsaken feelings of human subjectivity, doubt, and despair often displace the simple awareness that God is with us; and man becomes obsessed with the fear that he is all alone in an impersonal universe behind which there is no concern and compassion for the plight of man. Into this empty and futile situation the presence of God was made known in a body of flesh. It was the presence of One in whom all things were created. John 1:1-5, with a poetic arrangement and a slight revision of the *New English Bible* translation, is the early Christian proclamation of the creation:

When all things began, the Word already was.  
The Word dwelt with God,  
and what God was, the Word was.  
(The Word, then, was with God at the beginning.)

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Ray Summers, *Worthy Is the Lamb* (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman, 1951), pp. 211-215; *The Life Beyond* (1959), pp. 202-207.

Through him all things came to be;  
 no single thing was created without him.  
 All that came to be was alive with his life,  
 and that life was the light of men.  
 The light shines in the dark,  
 and the darkness has never quenched it.

The first stage in the fulfillment of this is the incarnation. Another stanza of this early hymn to the Word speaks of the tabernacle of flesh in which the glory of God was veiled (1:4, NEB) :

So the Word became flesh;  
 he came to dwell among us,  
 and we saw his glory,  
 such glory as befits the Father's only Son. . . .

That which was in the bosom of the Father from before creation and was made known as a body in the incarnation will appear as a bride in the Holy City of the consummation. The bride is a most fitting symbol for this eternal relation, for the nearest parallel to the heavenly relation is the human relation of love, love that at times may be so complete that the two, as with husband and wife, become one. It is then that even physical relations become personal relations.

The apocalyptic voice, composed of a constellation of Old Testament phrases, is translated by James Moffatt with these phrases in italics so that the shattered hopes of the past become the sure hope of the future (Rev. 21:3f.) :

*Lo, God's dwelling place is with men,  
 with men will he dwell;  
 they shall be his people,  
 and God will himself be with them:  
 he shall wipe every tear from their eyes,  
 and death shall be no more —  
 no more wailing, no more crying, no more pain,  
 for the former things have passed away.*

Creation and incarnation have come to the Omega point of the consummation, the goal of the whole creative and redemptive process by which we are made persons to love and be loved. Love has created a fellowship that is eternal, and this fellowship of love is the ultimate purpose that gives meaning to even the painful moments in the process of making us persons.

*The City of God.* The city (Rev. 21:9-27), still identified with the bride, symbolizes eternal glory and is God's answer to the problem of human hostility, individual and collective. In

this relation the individual becomes a person and the collective crowd becomes a community of self-communication. The very glory of this city is the radiance of personal relations. John "saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb" (21:22f.). This is the temple in which all conquerors are made pillars (3:12) as they are incorporated into the eternal glory of God's presence.

A real "united nations," the corporate relations of the Holy City, will be fully realized in this eternal relation. "By its light shall the nations walk; and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it, and its gates shall never be shut by day — and there shall be no night there; they shall bring into it the glory and honor of the nations" (21:24f.). This ultimate and eternal pattern by which all nations are to be related to one another in God and the Lamb is not so remote from this world of relativity that it justifies a pessimistic attitude toward world peace. It is true that eternal peace does not and cannot exist on earth, as Immanuel Kant's essay on the subject assumes and as Woodrow Wilson dreamed, but it is fatal when men dismiss the dream as a delusion and sink back into the despair of international discord and possible destruction. The earthly city is not the eternal city, but that is no reason for men to make this earth into an inferno of hell.

The twelve gates and the twelve foundations of the city represent the whole Church of God, the old covenant and the new covenant, the time when the fullness of Israel follows the fullness of the Gentiles, when the hundred and forty-four thousand sealed "out of every tribe of the sons of Israel" (7:4) have joined the "great multitude which no man can number from every nation, from all tribes and people and tongues" (7:9). This vision helps us to understand why Paul was willing to be "accursed and cut off from Christ" himself, that his Jewish brethren might be saved (Rom. 9:3). Through the gates of the city that will never be shut people who are purified by the blood of the Lamb may pass. "But nothing unclean shall enter it, nor any one who practices abomination or falsehood, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev. 21:27). The "beloved city," which was only "the camp of the saints" before the deceived of the nations were "consumed" and "the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of

fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet were" 20:7-10), is now the Lamb's bride and God's eternal city.

*The Garden of God.* The garden (Rev. 22:1-5) symbolizes eternal life and is God's answer to the problem of human mortality. The Scriptures speak of three Edens, corresponding to the three pictures of Paradise. "Before" all history was that state of dreaming innocence when the personal relation between God and man was as real as the gentle breeze that blows in the cool of the evening. The consciousness of guilt and estrangement disrupts this relation and fills mankind with fear and dread. "And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees in the garden" (Gen. 3:8).

A second condition of Eden is "above" all history. This Eden is "the garden of God" that symbolizes the perfection that belongs to God and all who are in harmony with God (Ezek. 28:13). There are three stages to Eden as there are three stages to Paradise and three stages to the Holy City, and the Eden "above" corresponds to the Jerusalem above. Ultimately as the city comes "down out of heaven from God" (Rev. 21:2) it is the Lamb's bride, at once a tabernacle, a city, and a garden.

In the garden of eternal life all living is knowing. Jesus came into the world to give this eternal life to all whom the Father has given Him. This eternal life is the intimate personal relation by which we come to "know" the true God and Jesus Christ whom He sent into the world (John 17:3).

The symbolism of the garden has the same personal significance. Living with the eternal life of God is symbolized by "the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month" (Rev. 22:1f.). Knowing God in the eternal relation of love is experienced by the servants who worship Him as they "see his face, and his name shall be on their foreheads" (22:4). To live is to know, and to know is to live.

Thus far the eternal destiny of redeemed humanity has been expressed in "the language of Zion," the concrete symbolism that "speaks to the condition of those saturated with the words of Holy Scriptures." Unfortunately this rich symbolism may be a stumbling block, not only to those without biblical back-

ground but also to those who would reduce the symbolism to rationalistic literalism. Symbolism always points to a reality too great for ordinary language, and this is especially the case with religious symbolism. We are forced to speak of heavenly things with an earthly language.

An ancient writer like Augustine, uninhibited, and free of scientific and semantic problems, gave expression to the same longings that make modern man restless. His "I-Thou" relations were as powerful as any modern personalist could express it. Of man in praise of God he says: "Thou hast prompted him, that he should delight to praise thee, for thou hast made us for thyself, and restless is our heart until it comes to rest in thee."<sup>11</sup>

At the end of his books on *The City of God* this personal relation is viewed as an eternal relation. "There we shall rest and we shall see; we shall see and we shall love; we shall love and we shall praise. Behold what shall be in the end and shall not end" (XXII.30).<sup>12</sup> The I-Thou relation in the prayer and praise of worship is but a preparation for the eternal adoration of God's grace and glory in the Holy City.

At the end of our own meditation on heavenly things, in a time of world turmoil and personal testing, the apostolic words at the end of an ancient protest against religious apostasy give expression to deepest feeling (Jude 24f.).

Now to him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you without blemish before the presence of his glory with rejoicing, to the only God, our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and for ever. Amen.

Any effort to translate biblical symbols into modern language is in danger of distortion, but a translation is often necessary if our witness is made to those who do not speak "the language of Canaan." Personalistic philosophy, meeting the challenge of modern secularism, often uses language that helps considerably in the evangelistic work of the church, especially among "emancipated" intellectuals.<sup>13</sup>

The first example is an analysis of the self, written by a pro-

11 *Confessions*, I.1. *Translation of Library of Christian Classics*, VII, 31.

12 The translation, from a beautiful little book with many other classic quotations, is by E. L. Mascall, *Grace and Glory* (London: Faith Press, 1961), p. 13.

13 This has been given impetus in the personalistic idealism of C. A. Campbell, *On Selfhood and Godhood* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1957).

thetic personality who has spoken to the secular minds of modern men as few are able to do. Reinhold Niebuhr's *The Self and the Dramas of History*, written in a time of great personal crisis, elaborates the three dialogues of the self "with itself, with its neighbor, and with God" in a manner that greatly illuminates human uniqueness. Rejecting the rationalism of Aristotle as an inadequate analysis of human freedom and responsibility, man's uniqueness is found in his capacity to transcend the flux of natural process of the present, as well as to remember the past and anticipate the future. This unique capacity includes reason, but the empirical self is far more than the rational faculties.<sup>14</sup>

The analysis of the self belongs to the realm of empirical investigation. Every person knows the dialogue of his internal life in which he *believes* himself to be free, and it seems impossible to speak of human responsibility and a meaningful human existence if this is a delusion. Social intercourse is necessary not only for social security but also for spiritual security, for loneliness is a muttered monologue of incipient hell. Even monks, living in monasteries, and hermits often relate themselves to animals and material objects as if they are personal. The paralyzed positivist must at least admit that it is an empirical fact, even if a delusion, that "the self imagines itself in an encounter with the divine" or "distinguishes itself by a yearning for the ultimate."<sup>15</sup>

The development of "the three dialogues" belongs to the deepest levels of experience, the desire for the good life, and it is difficult to conceive of human culture and civilization in which all this is dismissed as a delusive dream that ends in the night of oblivion. But when personal relations are taken seriously, mere events become acts, and the meaningless maze of things becomes a mosaic that falls into order. It is difficult to suppose that this order is an illusion.

Niebuhr's rigorous realism restrains him from flights of apocalyptic imagery, but his panoramic personalism has impressive implications for understanding the ultimate destiny of man in an it-less universe in which all relations are personal relations. "Thus the Biblical faith and hope, which gives meaning to human existence, may be proved inferentially to be true, or to

14 Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Self and the Dramas of History* (London: Faber and Faber, 1956), pp. 16f.

15 *Ibid.*, p. 17.

be more in accord with experienced facts than alternative faith and hopes."<sup>16</sup> It is this hope that is symbolized by the vision of the Holy City of God.

A second approach turns more definitely to an analysis of society. In 1953-54 John Macmurray delivered the Gifford Lectures of the University of Glasgow on *The Form of the Personal*, but the two volumes were not published until 1957-61. His impressive analysis of the personal in all of its possible relations concludes with what we have been calling the it-less universe in which all relations are personal relations, or, as Macmurray terms it, "the personal universe."<sup>17</sup>

The implications of this philosophical study for religious belief, in both immanent and transcendent relations, are destructive for dualistic thinking, but the concrete realism of biblical thought becomes more relevant to our understanding of the good society on earth and in heaven. Macmurray makes a radical shift from the perspective of the spectator who says "I think" to the participant who says "I do." "I think" is not excluded, but it is included in the more fundamental form of "I know." The relation is I-Thou rather than I-It. The outer becomes the Other. All existence is co-existence with other persons, even though these relations employ the means of impersonal science.

An approach of this type is neither atheism nor pantheism. God is the ultimate personal reality; the universe is His act and agent, the instrument of His intention and the arena of His glory. It is not possible on these grounds to exclude either His immanence or His transcendence. All that which is more than body, and the universe itself, is the agent of God as the human body is the instrument of man. When the personal intentions of man are in harmony with the personal intentions of God, frustration falls away and fulfillment follows; this is an immediate experience which ultimately implies that the consummation is the realization of "persons in relation," an it-less universe. "To conceive the world thus is to conceive it as an act of God, the Creator of the world, and ourselves as created agents, with limited and dependent freedom to determine the future, which can be realized only on the condition that our intentions are in harmony with His intention, and which must frustrate itself if

16 *Ibid.*, pp. 259f.

17 John Macmurray, *Persons in Relation* (London: Faber and Faber, 1957), pp. 206-224.

they are not."<sup>18</sup> Ultimate frustration is condemnation, and ultimate realization is the community of personal relations, the Holy City of God.

A third approach concentrates on the analysis of science, especially as it has been formulated in the philosophy of logical positivism. All references to future life are related to some type of "a present disclosure situation" which expresses purpose, moral retribution, or personal affection, or all of these.<sup>19</sup> "Disclosure-models" manifest a meaning that suggests "more than observables" beyond "observables." From the perspective of purpose, moral retribution and personal relations of love are seen with a variety of ultimate implications.

That which has been called the Holy City of God, the ultimate community, is illuminated by the disclosure-models of love. A disclosure-situation is a personal relation in which self-disclosure and sharing are seen to be what is called *agape* in the New Testament. *Agape* abides beyond the vast enigma of vanishing vicissitudes and has a relation to the historical process that is both immanent and transcendent. *Agape* may be experienced and expressed here and now, but the perfect fulfillment is not yet.

In the interim, personal relations of self-communication have intimations of immortality, intimations symbolized in history as the body of Christ and in ultimate destiny as the bride of Christ, "the Bride, the wife of the Lamb" (Rev. 21:9). Other symbols, less concrete and often less meaningful, may be substituted for the Biblical metaphors, but man's ultimate yearning remains the same.

The ultimate personal relation that is man's concern requires utter openness to all, to God and man, complete communication and communion, a situation stripped of sham and delivered from deception. The disclosure-situations of the present, in which souls grasped by *agape* become a medium through which the ultimate reality appears, are evidence of an eternal relation that knows in love and loves in knowledge. "For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood. So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love" (I Cor. 13:12f.).

18 *Ibid.*, p. 222.

19 I. T. Ramsey, *Freedom and Immortality* (London: SCM, 1960), pp. 122-136, 146-148.

God is love, not the abyss of nothingness into which man has his final plunge. The concrete situations of life disclose the dramatic dialogues of the self with itself, with others, and with God. This is the good life that now is and the eternal life that is to be. God is the ultimate mystery, hidden and revealed, the source of all life and immortality, to whom man may flee for refuge that he may not fall back into the empty void of nothingness from which he came. Life now is a decision-situation in which the choice is made between God and nothing.

This does not mean that man can ever be as if he had never been. God is a part of all He has made, even as we are a part of all we have met. Once we have become related to God in creation, and especially in redemption, this relation is in some sense eternal, being as it is the experience of the living God. That is why the biblical picture of destruction and damnation is never one of absolute annihilation. Religion is relation, and our relation to God is eternal, either without or within the Holy City.

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